KHAJURAHO

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KHAJURAHO

A Study in the Cultural Conditions of Chandella Society

With 110 *Photographs and* 350 *Line Drawings*



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FOR

MY PARENTS

FOREWORD

THE monuments of Khajuraho, because of their architectural significance and rich wealth of sculptures, have been increasingly attracting wide attention from casual visitors as much as from serious scholars. Recent years have witnessed more than one serious publication and a number of technical papers devoted to one or other phase or aspect of art, history, religion or culture of this important centre of early medieval Indian art and architecture. Dr. Vidya Prakash, one of our earnest younger scholars, has added a very interesting and well-documented study to this growing volume of literature It is, to my mind, a most welcome venture and will serve, I am sure, as an important book of reference on the social history of India.

The sub-title of the volume describes it as "A Study in the Cultural Conditions of Chandella Society," since it was during the regime and chiefly under the patronage of the kings of this dynasty that the monuments of Khajuraho were conceived, planned and executed. Here is thus the story of an intense building activity spread over for more than two centuries. For his specific purpose Dr. Vidya Prakash has examined and analysed the enormous amount of sculptured figures into which these medieval temples seem to dissolve themselves, to make them yield as much detailed information as possible on such items of contemporary life as, for example, dress and ornaments ; hair styles ; cosmetics ; music, dance and painting ; games and amusements ; military life and weapons of war ; industrial arts and professions ; furniture and household articles; education and learning; reli-

gious conditions and beliefs and miscellaneous activities in everyday life. Obviously he has broken fresh ground and has used the sculptured figures as records of social history. Wherever possible he has, therefore, sought to explain and illuminate his evidence of descriptive archaeology with the help of references from literature, both creative and technical. It is not difficult, therefore, to make out from his analysis and description a somewhat clear picture of considerable segments of what seems to have been the upper strata of mid-Indian society in early medieval times, and for this he certainly deserves thanks of all those who are interested in the subject.

Everyone knows that the monuments of Khajuraho are full of what may be called *mithuna* or erotic figures, and no account of the monuments or of the contemporary life as revealed by the sculptures can be complete without an examination of the nature and character of this particular phenomenon. Dr. Vidya Prakash has, therefore, found it necessary to devote two fairly long chapters at the end, one giving the background of the *mithuna* theme in Indian art and literature and another providing an interpretation of the *mithuna* figures of Khajuraho. One may or may not agree with the analysis and interpretation of the author, but few will question that he has put forward very good material for a serious consideration of the subject. His approach is critical and objective and his arguments have been clearly set forth.

One only wishes the author gave some attention to the socio-economic life that reared up and sustained such intense art and religious activities as one finds at Khajuraho, and that over such a long period. Where did the wherewithal of the materials and labour that went into the making of these temples come from ? To what extent is the evidence of diamond mining in the region relevant in this connection ? Was the economy purely rural-agricultural, or was it supplemented by industry, trade and commerce ? If so, to what extent ? Where was the labour drawn from ? Is there any living tradition of building and sculptural activity at Khajuraho or thereabouts as there is in Rajasthan and Orissa ? These and similar other questions remain yet to be answered, if we want to reconstruct a complete picture of the socio-cultural life of the given time and space.

But one must be thankful for what Dr. Vidya Prakash has been able to achieve, and he has achieved a great deal. I have great pleasure in commending his book to all students of Indian art and life.

NIHARRANJAN RAY

Director,
Indian Institute
of Advanced Study,
Simla.

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PREFACE

MUCH work has been done on Khajuraho temples by Cunningham, Havell, Fergusson, Smith, Percy Brown, Stella Kramrisch, Krishnadeva, Zannas, and many other scholars, but no systematic analysis of the material contents of the sculptures has been attempted so far. The only attempt in this direction has been recently made by Dr. Urmila Agarwal in her book *Khajuraho Sculptures and Their Significance.* But this work too, though deserving the credit of using the sculptures of Khajuraho as a source of material life, is sketchy and omits many of the important aspects of life fully illustrated in the sculptures. Most of her chapters are devoted to art, sculpture and iconography which hardly come in the purview of material life. To illustrate her points, the author appears to have used only a few select sculptures. The entire bulk of the sculptural material of Khajuraho, so rich as a source of contemporary material life, has not been fully exploited. A mass of sculptures scattered outside Khajuraho in various museums and private collections has been completely left out. Some of her interpretations of the sculptures are also not beyond dispute.

The present work is an attempt to give a complete picture of the life between c. 800 A.D. and c. 1200 A.D. in central India, as far as we can gather it from the sculptural representations. It includes the social, economic, religious and moral life of the Chandella Society. No doubt, the sculptures have their own limitations in providing such information and sometimes leave big lacunae. It is not always easy to derive direct and simple conclusions on their basis or to give a complete

picture. We have discussed this point in detail at appropriate places in the body of the text and suggested means to utilize them. To fill in the lacunae in the testimony of the sculptures and also to explain certain representations, we have tried to make use of contemporary monuments, inscriptions and literary works, as far as possible.

We have been inspired in our attempt by some works of a similar nature done on the other monuments of India. Mention may be made of the *Monuments of Sanchi* by Marshall, Foucher and Majumdar. Although it is more a work of descriptive nature, on the architecture and sculpture, it paved the way to showing as to how the sculptures could also be looked at to obtain a glimpse of the contemporary life. R. L. Mitra in his work *Antiquities of Orissa* has better utilised the Orissan sculptures for reconstructing the pattern of life of eastern India in the early medieval period. Mitra's work, although the only one of its kind, however, suffers from some serious defects. It fails to give a compact picture of the material culture of the people and is confined to a mere description of articles represented in the sculptures without properly integrating them into the flowing current of the civilization. Nevertheless, I consider this work to be of great importance and I have derived much from it. I have also been inspired by a few works of Western scholars who have reconstructed everyday life of the people on the basis of Greek, Roman, or Egyptian monuments, paintings and art objects.

The present work is a revised and slightly enlarged version of my thesis approved for the Ph. D. Degree of the University of Lucknow in 1964. Originally it contained 13 chapters and an Appendix. Later on I made certain alterations and additions to make the work up-to-date. An exhaustive discussion on the erotic sculptures in the form of two separate chapters has also been added to make the study complete. I have tried to show that the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho were a logical outcome of a number of factors already present in the social, moral and religious life and usages of the times.

Before I conclude, I must express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Niharranjan Ray, sometime Bagisvari Professor of Indian Art and Culture, University of Calcutta and presently Director of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, for writing a Foreword to this work. I have also been immensely benefited by his mature thoughts and suggestions for which I tender my sincerest thanks to him. The thesis was written under the supervision of Dr. B. N. Srivastava of Lucknow University to whom I am indebted for his help, guidance and encouragement to a degree for which no amount of thanks would suffice. I can hardly find words to express my gratefulness to Prof. A. K. Narain who has always been a source of inspiration and who took keen interest in the day-to-day progress of my work. I also wish to record my indebtedness to Prof. Radhakamal Mukerjee, and the late Professors J. N. Banerjea and V. S. Agrawala, Prof. R. K. Dikshit and Prof. V. S. Pathak, who gave me the benefit of their erudite knowledge. I am grateful to my friend and colleague, Mr. J. N. Tiwari, for going through

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To my wife Ranu who not only guided me in interpreting some hair-styles and drapery depicted in the sculptures but also helped me in the preparation of the press copy I need not give any thanks.

Varanasi

VIDYA PRAKASH

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Unless otherwise specified on the plates, the photographs are by the author

ABBREVIATIONS

TEMPLES

Adhis.	*Adhishthāna*
Adi.	Ādinātha Temple
Ardhaman.	*Ardhamaṇḍapa*
Chatur	Chaturbhuja Temple
Chitra.	Chitragupta Temple
Devi.	Devī Jagadambe Temple
Dula	Dūlādeva Temple
in	Inside
ft	Front
fz.	Thin frieze on the temples
Jav.	Javārī Temple
Kand	Kandariyā Mahādeva Temple
Lak	Lakshmana Temple
lt	Left
Mahādeva	Mahādeva Temple
Mahaman	*Mahāmaṇḍapa*
Man.	*Maṇḍapa*
Mod	Modern
Out.	Outside
Par	Pārśvanātha Temple
Pārvatī	Pārvatī Temple
Prad.	*Pradakshiṇāpatha*
rt	Right
S.E.	South-east
Śāntinātha	Śāntinātha Temple
Sub	Subsidiary
Vam.	Vāmana Temple
Viswa	Viśwanātha Temple

BOOKS AND JOURNALS

A.B.O.R.I.	Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
A.I.	Ancient India, Bulletin of the Archaeological Survey of India.

A.O.C.	The Art of the Candellas—O.C. Gangoly.
A.R., A.S.I.	Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India
A.S.M	Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India
A.S.M.M.	Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum—C. Sivaramamurti.
A.S.R.	Archaeological Survey of India Report—A Cunningham
B.M C.G.D.	British Museum Catalogue of Gupta Coins
D.H.N.I.	Dynastic History of Northern India—H C. Ray.
E.I.	Epigraphia Indica
H.M S.	Hindu Medieval Sculpture—Raymond Burnier.
H.T.	Hindu Temple—Stella Kramrisch
I.A.	Indian Antiquary.
I.A.H.	Indian Art and Heritage
I.C.	Indian Culture.
I.S.P.M.	Indian Sculptures in the Philadelphia Museum of Art—Stella Kramrisch
J.A.O.S.	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
J.D.L.	Journal of the Department of Letters
J.I.A.I	Journal of Indian Art and Industry.
J.I.S O.A.	Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.
J.N.S.I.	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India
J.U.P H.S	Journal of the Uttar Pradesh Historical Society
K.S.	Kama Shilpa—Francis Leeson.
Māna.	Mānasollāsa.
Nīti.	Nītiprakāśikā—Vaiśampāyana.
P.C.	Prabodhachandrodaya—Krishna Miśra.

Diacritical Marks

Sometimes certain diacritical marks will be found missing in the italic types used in the main body of the book due to their non-availability in the type face used. It is, however, hoped that this will not seriously hamper the understanding of the words

Chapter 1

HISTORY OF KHAJURAHO

KHAJURAHO—once the capital of the Chandella Rajputs of Bundelkhand—witnessed the greatest artistic and cultural activity from the 9th to the 12th centuries of the Christian era. Today, no vestige remains of this glamorous township with palaces and mansions of brick and wood, except the magnificent Hindu and Jaina temples, which represent some of the most creative examples of medieval Hindu architecture. Art critics rightly consider the temples of Khajuraho as the culmination of Indo-Aryan genius in architecture. Probably nowhere in the vast Indian sub-continent are the temples grouped so effectively at one place, in so large a number, one following another closely in time, each with its own beauty and dignity as at Khajuraho. The temple walls overlaid with innumerable sculptures carved in high relief depict the vast drama of human life with minute attention to details.

Khajuraho is now a small village in the Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh. It is situated about 18 miles south-east of Chhatarpur and 34 miles south of Mahoba on the high road between Sagar and Hamirpur on the right bank of the Ken river.

The name Khajuraho has many variations in epigraphs, literature and accounts of foreign travellers. It has been written as *Kharjūravāhaka* (the word being Sanskritised) in Khajuraho Stone Inscription of Dhanga of the year V.S. 1059 (A.D. 1002)[1] and as *Khajūravāṭika* in an inscription of V.S. 1026 (A.D. 969).[2] The writer of *Parmāla Rāso* gives the name as *Khajjūrapura*[3] while the travellers Abu

[1] *E.I.*, Vol. I, p. 147, lines 32-33.
[2] *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, p. 56.
[3] *Parmāla Rāso*, p 11, Vs. 109.

Rihan[1] and Ibn Batuta[2] called it respectively *Khajūrāhah* and *Kajurā* or *Kajarrā*. Khajuraho is sometimes also written as *Khajurāhā*, but as in Bundelkhand dialect the final *o* represents *ā* in ordinary Hindi, the ending in *o* may be regarded as more correct.[3] It will be evident that the word *Khajūra* is invariably present in each variation, showing that the name Khajuraho had definitely something to do with the *Khajūra* tree or date-palms. Tradition confirms that view, according to which a pair of gold *Khajūra* trees once decorated one of the city gates of Khajuraho. But a more natural derivation of the name, as Cunningham thinks, would have been from the *Khajūra* trees which clustered around the town during the prosperous days of the royal city.[4]

The tract round about Khajuraho had been known for its cultural achievements since ancient times. According to a leading authority, 'In the cultural sphere this region played a significant role in Indian History from *circa* 200 B.C. and witnessed a remarkable efflorescence of sculptural and architectural arts during the Śunga period, with Bharhut as a centre and again during the Gupta times, with leading centres at Bhumara, Khoh, Nachna and Deogarh.'[5] In the 7th century A.D., Hiuen Tsang had witnessed a number of Buddhist monasteries at Khajuraho.[6] Numerous ruined mounds scattered to the north and east of the village of Khajuraho are most probably the remains of some of these monasteries. Khajuraho was probably the capital of the Jajhotia Brahmins during Hiuen Tsang's visit.[7] It was, however, the Chandella Rajputs who endowed Khajuraho with a high political and cultural status, unrivalled in any period of the history of the region

Several foreign travellers who came to India from time to time have left their accounts of Khajuraho. Hiuen Tsang was the first foreigner who mentions the name of the province as *Chi-chi-to*, which is the Chinese counterpart of Jijhotī or Jajāhoti of the later travellers and Jejābhukti, with other variants, of the inscriptions. Though the pilgrim does not name the capital of *Chi-chi-to*, it is generally assumed that it must have been Khajuraho.[8] Hiuen Tsang records in his itinerary that 'this country was above 4000 *li* and its capital about 15 *li*, in circuit, the soil was rich, the crops were abundant, and pulse and wheat were products. The majority of the people were not Buddhists but there were some tens of monasteries with a few Brethren; there were above ten Deva temples and 1000 professed adherents of the other systems. The king, who was a Brahmin, was a firm believer

[1] Reinaud, *Fragment Arabes*, etc, p 106
[2] Gibb, *Ibn Batuta*, pp 226 and 363
[3] Cf *I A*, Vol XXXVII (1908), p 132
[4] *A S.R*, Vol XXI, p 55
The derivation of the name of a place from the date-palms is not unusual We can cite at least two examples one the village '*Khajurāra*' in Bahraich and the other '*Khajūragaon*' in Rae-Bareli districts of Uttar Pradesh, both of which owe their names to *Khajūra* trees.
[5] *A.I*, No 15, p 43
[6] *A S R*, Vol II, p 416
[7] Ibid, p 416
[8] *I A*, Vol. XXXVII, p 131.

in Buddhism, and encouraged men of merit, and learned scholars of other lands collected here in numbers.'[1] The Brahmin King mentioned here must have been a governor under Harshavardhana.[2] The reference of this king is historically very significant for it puts an upward limit to the rise of the Chandella dynasty.

Khajuraho is afterwards mentioned by Abu Rihan. Calling it *Kajūrāhah,* the capital of Jajāhoti, as already stated, he places it at 30 Parsangs or about 90 miles to the south-east of Kanauj.[3] But the true location of Khajuraho is due south and the distance also about 180 miles which is three times what the traveller has recorded.[4] Such errors of distance and location are often encountered in the accounts of foreign travellers who had to rely mostly on hearsay information and local traditions.

Further, the place finds mention in the accounts of Ibn Batuta who visited it in A.D. 1335. He informs us that *Kajurā* possessed a lake about 1 mile in length, and was surrounded by the temples of idols. The statement is exactly in conformity with its present situation, in view of the number of temples at Khajuraho surrounding Ninorā Tāla or Khajūrasāgara. The information supplied by Ibn Batuta sheds some light also on the religious condition of the place in the first half of the 14th century. He writes that the place was inhabited 'by a tribe of jogis with long and clotted hair. Their colour inclined to yellow which arose from their fasting. Many of the Moslems of those parts attended upon them to learn magic.'[5] This account furnishes three valuable facts. firstly, that Khajuraho, being inhabited by the saints and mendicants, continued to be a religious seat in the 14th century and that the temples were still in use; secondly, that the Hindus were tolerant enough to instruct the Muslims about what they knew, and hence the remark of Alberuni (Abu Rihan) that 'they (Hindus) are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they knew'[6] is no longer valid for the times of Ibn Batuta; thirdly, that the Tantric elements were at work, as indicated by the popularity of magic.

RULERS OF KHAJURAHO

Khajuraho had reached its zenith during the rule of the Chandellas,[7] whose kingdom always included it, along with Kalanjar and Mahoba, for more than two and a half centuries.[8] They rose to power as humble feudatories of the great

[1] Watters, Vol. II, p 251.
[2] C. V Vaidya, *History of Medieval Hindu India*, Vol II, p 124.
[3] Reinaud, op. cit, p 106
[4] A Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India*, p. 551.
[5] *A S R.*, Vol XXI, p. 56
[6] Sachau, Vol. I, p. 22
[7] Chandellas are variously mentioned as *Chandrātreya* in two Khajuraho Inscriptions of V S 1011 and V S. 1059 (*E.I*, Vol I, p. 124, Ibid., p. 141), as *Chandrella* in Dudhai Inscription of Devalabdhi (*I.A.*, Vol XVIII, pp 236-37) and as *Chandella*, which the historians generally like to write, in Madanpur Inscription of Chāhamāna Prithvīrāja III (*A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, p 174) and Banaras grant of Kalchurī Lakshmī Karṇa (*E.I*, Vol II, p 306).
[8] *I.A*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 132.

Pratīhāras of Kanauj in the first quarter of the 9th century and survived as a strong political power until the close of the 13th century.[1] Whatever the actual origin of the Chandellas might have been, they claimed that they belonged to the lunar race of the Kshatriyas.[2]

Nannuka (*c.* 831 A.D.)[3] was the first historical king of the dynasty. He carved out a small principality as a petty vassal of the Pratīhāras.[4] The son and successor of Nannuka was Vākpati who is said to have excelled the mythical kings Prithu and Kākutstha by his wisdom and valour.[5] According to Ray he may have increased the borders of his ancestral principality.[6] Vākpati had two sons, Jayaśakti (*c.* 850 A.D.) and Vijayaśakti. The family records have expressed much praise for these brothers, who have been described as 'Victorious heroes.'[7] According to the information contained in the Mahoba Fragmentary Inscription of Kīrttivarman, the province of Jejābhukti where the Chandellas ruled was named after Jejā,[8] the abbreviated form of Jayaśakti. Vijayaśakti who ruled after Jayaśakti was succeeded by his son Rāhila. The latter was a great warrior and a terror to his enemies.[9] He is famous for his building activities. He constructed temples and excavated tanks, lakes, etc. At Ajayagarh a temple has some stones inscribed with his name.[10] An old lake near Mahoba is known as Rāhila-Sāgara, obviously after the name of this king.

After Rāhila came his son Harsha to the Chandella throne. These were the dark days for the Pratīhāras, whose capital Kanauj was captured by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Indra III, and Mahīpāla, the Pratīhāra king, became a fugitive.[11] He was, however, reinstated by a Chandella king[12] who has been identified with Harsha by most scholars. This memorable event evidently enhanced the power and prestige of the Chandellas. Harsha probably constructed Mātaṅgeśvara temple to commemorate his victory over the Rāshṭrakūṭas.[13]

Harsha's son and successor Yaśovarman (*c.* 925 A.D.) added new lustre to the glory of his family by conquering the famous hill-fort of Kalanjar.[14] The success of Yaśovarman over the Pratīhāras, the Kalachurīs, the Pālas, the Paramāras, etc., earned for the Chandellas a definite place in the political history of Northern India. Yaśovarman is also known to have built a magnificent temple dedicated

[1] N S Bose, *History of the Candellas of Jejakabhukti* (1956), p. 171.
[2] *E I*, Vol I, p 138, Vss 8-12.
[3] We follow the dates worked out by S. K. Mitra, *The Early Rulers of Khajuraho*, Appendix II
[4] *D H N I*, Vol II, p. 668.
[5] *E I*, Vol I, p 141, Vss 16-17.
[6] *D H N I*, Vol II, p 669.
[7] *E I*, Vol I, pp 141-42; Ibid., Vol. IV, pp 153-74.
[8] *E.I*, Vol I, p. 221, Vs., 10
[9] *E I*, Vol. I, p. 131, Vss 16-17.
[10] *A.S.R.*, Vol VII, p. 41.
[11] A. S. Altekar, *The Rāshṭrakūṭas and Their Times*, pp. 101-02.
[12] *E.I.*, Vol. I, p. 122.
[13] Cf *A I.*, No. 15, p. 44.
[14] *E.I.*, Vol. I, pp. 127-28, Vs. 31.

to Vishṇu[1] and a big tank.[2] The former was identified by Cunningham with Lakshmaṇa temple at Khajuraho.[3]

The glory and splendour of the Chandellas actually reached its zenith during the reign of his son Dhaṅga (*c.* 950 to 1002-03 A.D.). He consolidated the Chandella power by numerous conquests. According to the assumption of Ray, his reign was long and distinguished, probably unmarred by defeats at the hands of Turushkas.[4] Dhaṅga was not only a conqueror and statesman of repute, but also a great patron of art and architecture. The temples of Jinanātha, Vaidyanātha, and Śambhu were built during his time. The magnificent temple of God Śambhu was erected by Dhaṅga himself. It enshrined two *liṅgas*, one made of emerald and the other of stone.[5] The temple is identified with the extant Viśwanātha temple in which, however, only the stone *liṅga* has survived.[6] The Jinanātha temple (identifiable probably with Pārśvanātha temple) was built by one Pāhilla, who was held in high esteem by Dhaṅga.[7] The third temple, namely, Vaidyanātha cannot be identified. Dhaṅga patronised the philosopher Gautama Akshapāda who founded the school of Nyāya.[8]

The reign of Dhaṅga's son and successor, Gaṇḍa (*c.* 1002-03 to 1018 A.D.), was short and peaceful. The construction of Devī Jagadambe and Chitragupta temples may, probably, be attributed to this king.[9] Gaṇḍa was succeeded by his son Vidyādhara (*c.* 1018-1022 A.D.). The important events of his reign were: two invasions by Mahmud Gaznavi; his victories over the Kalachurīs and the Paramāras , and probably, the erection of Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple of Khajuraho. The last suggestion is supported by two facts ; firstly, that Vidyādhara was a great devotee of Śiva, and secondly, that there is a short epigraph on a *maṇḍapa*-pilaster of this temple, mentioning a king named Viriṁda, which may have been a pet name of Vidyādhara [10]

The Chandella power gradually declined after the reign of Vidyādhara due to the Kalachurī and Muslim invasions. With that the importance of Khajuraho also dwindled, because thereafter, the Chandellas mainly concentrated on the forts of Mahoba, Ajayagarh, and Kalanjar due to purely strategic reasons.

After Vidyādhara came in succession Vijayapāla (*c.* 1022-1051 A.D.), Devavarman (*c.* 1051 A.D.), and Kīrttivarman (*c.* 1070-1098 A.D.). The last-named king has been highly extolled in literary and epigraphic records. The Chandella power was once more revived by his success over the powerful Chedi ruler Karṇa,

[1] *E I.*, Vol I, p 129, Vs 42
[2] *E I*, Vol I, p 144, Vs 38.
[3] *A S R*, Vol II, p. 426 , see also *A I*, No. 15, p. 44
[4] *D H N.I.*, Vol. II, p 683.
[5] *E.I.*, Vol I, pp. 145-47, Vss , 48, 63
[6] Cf. *A.I.*, No 15, p. 56.
[7] *E.I*, Vol. I, pp. 135-36 ; *A.I.*, No 15, p. 54
[8] R. K Mookerji, *Ancient India*, p. 406.
[9] Cf. *A.I.*, No. 15, p. 45.
[10] Ibid., p. 45.

with the help of one Gopāla.[1] Kīrttivarman was followed in succession by Sallakshaṇavarman (*c.* 1100 A.D.), Jayavarman (*c.* 1117 A.D.), Prithvīvarman (*c.* 1125 A.D.), and Madanavarman (*c.* 1129-1163 A.D.). Madanavarman was an illustrious king of the Chandella house. He defeated the rulers of Gujrat, Malwa, as well as the Chedi royal family [2] Paramardideva (*c.* 1166-1202 A.D.) who came to the Chandella throne after the short intervening reign of Yaśovarman, was the last great king of that family. The significant events of his reign were his conflict with Prithvīrāja Chāhamāṇa and the invasion of Kutubuddin to whom many parts of the Chandella kingdom, including the hill-fort of Kalanjar, were lost. Paramardideva was succeeded by Trailokyavarman (*c.* 1205 to 1240-41 or 1247 A.D.), who recovered Kalanjar and some of the lost portions of the Chandella territory.[3] After Trailokyavarman, the Chandellas hardly deserve any political status in Northern India. The successsors of Trailokyavarman were weaklings and the glory of the Chandella royal family rapidly diminished during their reign.

[1] Cf *P C*, (Chaukhamba, 1955), p 5; see also *E I*, Vol I, pp 217ff, 325, *I A*, Vol XXXVII, p 143
[2] C. V Vaidya, op cit, Vol III, p. 182
[3] *E.I.*, Vol I, pp 327, 329, Ibid, Vol XVI, pp. 272-77.

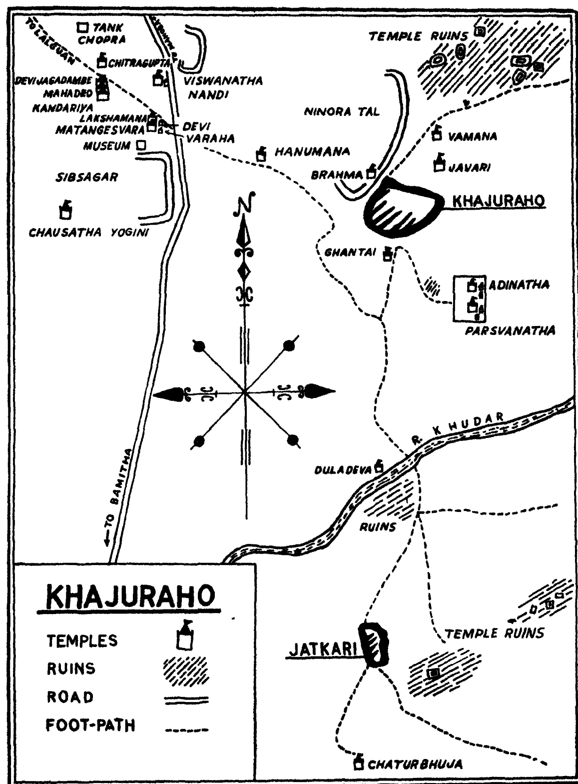


Plate I
SITE MAP OF KHAJURAHO

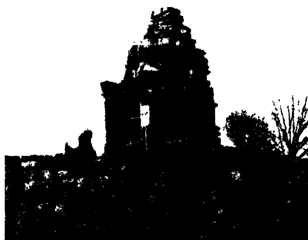
Chapter 2

THE TEMPLES

THE TEMPLES at Khajuraho cluster within a radius of a few miles At present there are over 30 temples which are in different states of preservation. Their preservation is greatly due to their geographical position and the fact that they were out of the path of Muslim invaders. Many of the temples have been extensively repaired from time to time, especially the Mahādeva temple and the Jaina group of temples, which have been continuously altered and restored.

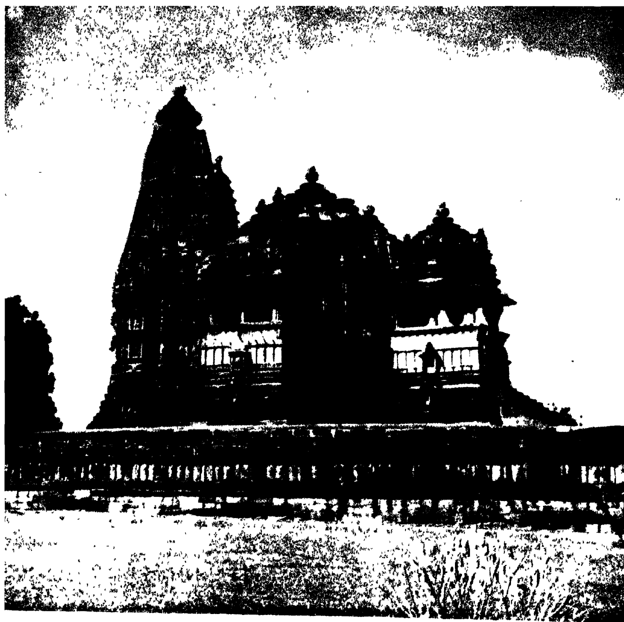
In the beginning granite was used for building these temples and the extant Chausaṭha-Yoginī temple, which is the earliest building on the site, has been built exclusively of this stone Later, for some time, granite and sandstone both were used simultaneously. The Brahmā and Lālaguān Mahādeva temples are built partly of granite and partly of sandstone Gradually, when a profusion of sculptures became the fashion of the day, granite did not find favour with the artists due to its hardness and was totally abandoned The other temples of Khajuraho are built exclusively of sandstone of fine grain, the varying shades being buff, pink or pale yellow. It was imported probably from the quarries of Panna Iron clamps have been used to hold stone blocks together.

Architecturally the temples of Khajuraho have certain distinctive features which are not to be found in other contemporary buildings. Each temple stands on a high and solid platform (*jagatī*), without the customary enclosure wall. The platform provides an open ambulatory. The essential components of the temples are the *garbhagriha* or sanctum, *antarāla* or antechamber, *maṇḍapa* or assembly hall and *ardhamaṇḍapa* or portico. The larger temples, such as Laksh-



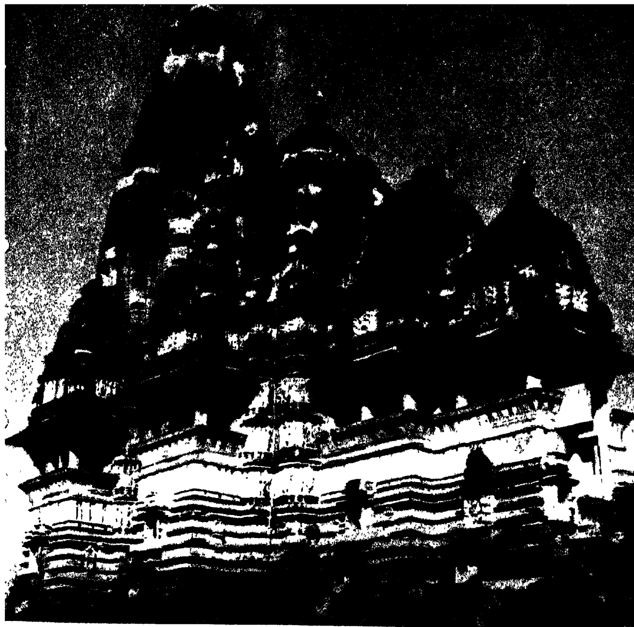
1 Jālagnān Mahādeva Temple

2 Kandariyā Mahādeva Temple



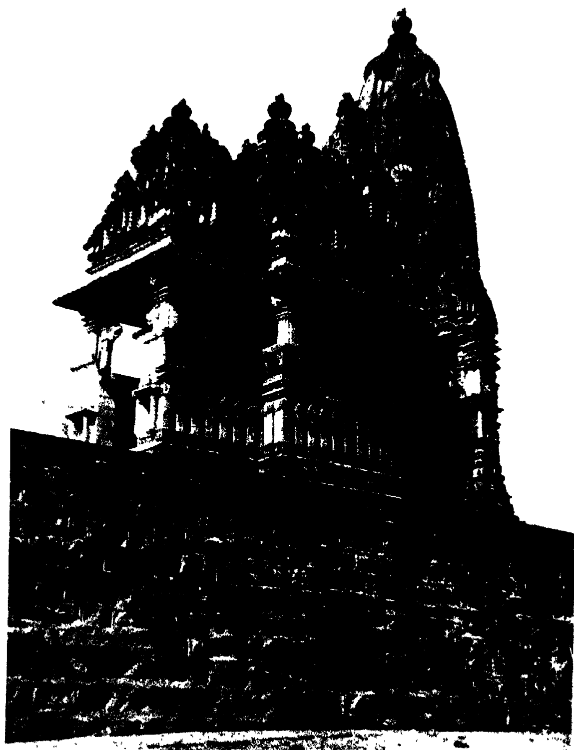
3

3. *Devi Jagadambe Temple*



4 *Viśvanātha Temple*

5 *Javārī Temple*



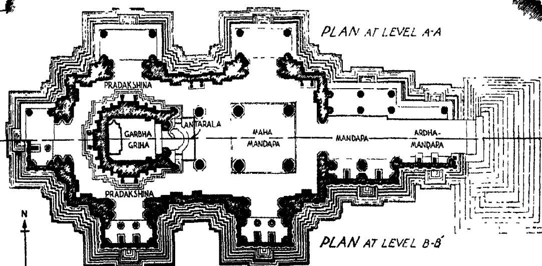


Plate II
LAKSHMANA TEMPLE — LONGITUDINAL SECTION AND PLAN
(From *Ancient India*, No 15, 1959)

maṇa, Viśwanātha and Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva, introduce two more elements, namely, *mahāmaṇḍapa* and an enclosed *pradakshināpatha* around the *garbhagriha* (see Pl. II). The *mahāmaṇḍapa* is the largest component of the building and is enclosed on all sides except the entrance and the balcony openings on the lateral transepts. The inner ambulatory goes round the sanctum with three balcony windows, one each on the two sides and the back. The larger temples were built on the *pañchāyatana* plan.[1] The temples have their entrance usually on the east (Chaturbhuja and Lālaguān temples have their entrance on the west), approached by a steep flight of steps. The doorways are unique achievements of both sculpture and architecture. They are 'more like ivory carving, or even a hanging drapery than chiselled stone.'[2]

Vertically the temples consist of a high basement (*jagatī*) over which rests prominently a high *adhishṭhāna* with a series of ornamental mouldings running horizontally. Over it has been built the *jaṅghā* or wall portion, with two or three bands of sculptures. The monotony of the walls has been skilfully relieved by window openings. Above the wall rises the graceful *śikhara*, the beauty and upward thrust of which have been accentuated by the addition of miniature spires or turrets (*uruśriṅgas*) Different components of the temple have individual roofs, the shortest over the portico and the tallest over the *vimāna*. The tall *śikhara* over the sanctum is curvilinear while that over other components is pyramidal in shape (Pl. II).

Śaivas, Vaishṇavas and Jainas all have their place at Khajuraho, as temples belonging to each religious denomination have been built at the site. The temples of different sects are so strikingly similar in architectural design that it is very difficult to differentiate one from the other without actually examining the sculptures of the temple carefully. The stylistic similarity of the different temples shows that they were built with some such idea 'that neither sect should surpass or be jealous of the other.' In the words of Fergusson, 'they must have been erected in an age of extreme toleration when any rivalry that existed must only have been among the architects in trying who could produce the most beautiful and most exquisitely adorned building.'[3] This only shows that, with regard to style and art, it is impossible to make any sectarian difference in Khajuraho temples.

The temples of Khajuraho are generally assigned to a century ranging from A.D. 950 to 1050,[4] the period when the Chandella power was at its zenith. But the question of their chronology is still unsettled. Saraswati and Krishna Deva have recently re-examined the question. The inscriptions of Khajuraho, according to Saraswati ranging in date from A.D. 953 to 1001, cannot always be

[1] Lakshmaṇa temple is the only one of all the temples of Khajuraho in which all the four subsidiary shrines are still preserved

[2] P. Brown, *Indian Architecture* (Buddhist and Hindu), 1956, p 136

[3] James Fergusson, *A History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol II, p 49

[4] James Fergusson, op cit, p 141, A K Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (1927), p 109, E. B Havell, *A Handbook of Indian Art*, p. 67; P Brown, op cit, p. 134; N S Bose, op cit, p 162.

assigned to particular temples with certainty and therefore the chronology based on the inscriptions should be regarded as 'rather tentative.'[1] He concludes that 'the direction of architectural movements in different parts of India, coupled with the chronological data supplied by the temples of known date, would indicate that none of the temples at Khajuraho, even those which on account of style may be regarded as the earliest, can be dated prior to the second half of the eleventh century A.D.'[2] To Krishna Deva, however, 'a closer scrutiny reveals that the earliest temple cannot be much later than 850 and the latest may go beyond 1100.'[3] Whatever the correct date of the temples may be, the sculptures of Khajuraho may conveniently be regarded as depicting the life of the people in Central India between A.D. 800 and 1200.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TEMPLES

According to tradition no less than 85 temples once adorned the city of Khajuraho. This does not seem to be an improbability in view of the numerous ruins round about Khajuraho village, extending far and wide, and the number of sculptures and architectural fragments stored in the Khajuraho Museum and other collections. Most of the temples are, however, lost except for nearly thirty which withstood centuries of neglect and the catastrophies of Nature, and still stand erect to tell of the glory that was Khajuraho. Some of the important and best preserved temples are the following, arranged according to their location.

CHAUSAṬHA YOGINI TEMPLE

This is the earliest surviving building at Khajuraho. It is oblong in plan and was originally surrounded by sixty-five cells. The one in the centre of the back wall facing the entrance was the main sanctum, which probably enshrined the image of goddess Kālī, while others housed sixty-four female goblins who attended this goddess of slaughter. In elevation the temple stands on a lofty *jagatī*. The temple has three marked peculiarities: firstly, it is built entirely of coarse-grained granite, whereas the remaining temples are built either of granite and sandstone mixed together or of the later material exclusively; secondly, it faces north unlike other temples which in the traditional way face east; thirdly, it is rectangular in plan as stated above, though all the other Yoginī temples found elsewhere are circular.[4] The three surviving images in this temple, namely, those of Mahishā-

[1] *The Struggle for Empire* (Ed R. C. Majumdar), 1957, p 565

[2] Ibid

[3] *A I*, No. 15, p 49.

[4] The other Yoginī temples are found at

(i) Bheraghat near Jabalpur (R D Banerji, 'The Haihayas of Tripuri and Their Monuments,' *A S M*, No 23, pp. 67 and 115, pl LVII)

(ii) Rampur Jharial, in Patna district (J Fergusson, op cit, II, p 51)

(iii) The temple at Mitauli (*A R., A S I*, 1915-16, I, p 18).

(iv) Dudhai, Lalitpur district (P C Mukerji, *Report on the Antiquarian Remains in the Lalitpur District*, Roorkee, 1899, p 29)

(v) A temple in the former state of Kalahandi (*A R., A S I.*, IX, p. 60)

suramardinī, Māheśwarī and Brahmāṇī,[1] which are massive and squat in appearance, may be regarded as the earliest sculptures of Khajuraho.

LĀLAGUĀN MAHĀDEVA TEMPLE (Photo 1)

The temple is built partly of granite and partly of sandstone. Originally, only two architectural components were present, namely, the sanctum and the portico, but the latter is now missing. An impressive Nandī on a high plinth faces the temple. As stated above, the doorways of Khajuraho temples have been profusely and artistically decorated, but this temple provides the solitary instance of a plain and simple door frame. It is also one of the two temples which face west.

KAṆḌARIYĀ MAHĀDEVA TEMPLE (Photo 2)

This is undoubtedly the best and the finest temple of the Khajuraho group, both in loftiness and embellishments. Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva, as the very name suggests, has been dedicated to Lord Śiva and enshrines a marble *liṅgam*, 4 ft. in circumference, in the sanctum. It is a *sāndhāraprāsāda* with *ardhamaṇḍapa*, *maṇḍapa*, *mahāmaṇḍapa*, *antarāla*, and *garbhagṛiha*. An inner ambulatory (*pradakshiṇā*) has been carried round the *garbhagṛiha*. The temple walls, both interior as well as the exterior, are profusely decorated. The triple bands of sculptures on the outer walls of the temple are crowded with groups of sculptures in high relief. The lofty *adhishthāna* has two rows of friezes, depicting processions of warriors, hunters, musicians, dancers, war-animals and numerous other scenes. The entrance is decorated with a beautiful and ornate *makaratorana* of five loops (*pañchapattra*). The door of the cella has the largest number of *śākhās*, namely seven, which are lavishly decorated.

There is hardly any surface area in the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple which has not been used by the sculptor to show his skill and his art. The general effect of this gorgeous luxury of embellishment is extremely pleasing, although the eye is often distracted by the abundance of details of even the smallest part of a piece of jewellery or a costume or whatever he chose to depict. But, 'despite the frequent use of the same ornamental theme, there is no suggestion whatever of boring monotony of mechanical repetition. An abundance of carving, yes, but in it there is an intrinsic harmony, rhythm and unity. And here lies the secret of the greatness of the Kaṇḍariyā: so much care has been devoted to creating a feeling of harmony in this edifice that the architect has succeeded in bringing to the faithful who entered the temple a sensation of soaring heavenwards. He attained this by a clever though simple device, whenever the worshipper proceeds from one *maṇḍapa* into another, the floor rises by one step and the image on its pedestal is on a much higher level than the floor of the *garbhagṛiha* itself.'[2]

[1] Of these three images, the first two are labelled.

[2] Zannas and Auboyer, *Khajuraho* (1960), p. 100.

DEVĪ JAGADAMBE TEMPLE (Photo 3)

Standing on the common plinth of the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva, this temple was originally dedicated to Vishṇu whose figure occupies the centre of the top lintel of the doorway to the sanctum (*lalāṭabimba*). But later it was the unfinished image of goddess Gaṅgā, wrongly identified as Kālī, that determined its present name. There are the usual three bands of sculptures on the outer walls. Thin friezes of sculptures are conspicuously absent on the *adhishṭhāna* and *jaṅghā*. The temple has two excellent images of iconographical interest—a three-headed eight-armed Śiva and a Varāha form of Vishṇu.

MAHĀDEVA TEMPLE

The small temple of Mahādeva stands between Kaṇḍariyā and Devī Jagadambe temples on the same *jagatī*. It has been extensively conserved by the Mahārājās of the former Chhatarpur estate and has undergone several changes,[1] due to which its original form is completely lost. The most important sculpture of this temple is the famous lion and the kneeling figure, seen in the *maṇḍapa*. Possibly the sculpture did not belong originally to this temple and was housed in the *maṇḍapa* much later to protect it from sun and rain. The gigantic sculpture covers almost the entire space of the *maṇḍapa* and mars the real use of the latter.[2]

CHITRAGUPTA TEMPLE

This temple greatly resembles Devī Jagadambe in plan, general conception, design, dimensions and decorative scheme. The temple has been dedicated to Sūrya, whose 4′ 10″ high image has been enshrined in the cella. The replica of the same deity figures on the *lalāṭabimba* also. The usual three bands of sculptures decorate the *jaṅghā*. The images of Brahmā and Saraswatī (south), Śiva and Pārvatī (west), Vishṇu and Lakshmī, and Varāha (north) are iconographically interesting.

VIŚWANĀTHA TEMPLE (Photo 4)

This temple is very similar to the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva in general arrangement of plan, elevation and the disposition of sculptures, but the latter is definitely superior. The cella enshrines Śiva in symbolic form (*liṅgam*, 12″ diameter), while the *lalāṭabimba* depicts him in anthropomorphic form. The three bands of sculptures on the outer walls portray gods, goddesses and Surasundarīs in graceful poses, while the thin friezes on the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings depict scenes of everyday life. The temple has two stone inscriptions in its *maṇḍapa*. One is the inscription of Kokkala of the year V. S. 1058 (A.D. 1001), which records the erection of a temple of Śiva Vaidyanātha.[3] The other one, a stone inscription of Dhaṅga of the year

[1] *A.S.R.*, Vol. II, p. 421.
[2] Cf. Zannas, etc., op. cit., p. 102
[3] *E.I.*, Vol. I, pp. 147-52.

V.S. 1059 (A.D. 1002), refers to the erection of a magnificent temple for God Śambhu with two *liṅgas* of stone and emerald.[1]

Near by there is a small Nandī temple which enshrines a colossal statue of Nandī with a lustrous polish. It is 7′ 3″ in length and 6′ in height.[2] On the *jagatī*, there is a frieze of elephants depicted frontally.

PĀRVATĪ TEMPLE

This small temple stands to the south-east of the Viśwanātha temple. In view of the figure of Vishṇu on the *lalāṭabimba*, the temple appears to have been originally dedicated to Vishṇu. But now it enshrines a 4′ 10″ high image of Gaurī on her mount *godhā* (iguana). The temple has been extensively conserved. Probably it was a subsidiary shrine of some full-fledged temple which is now lost.

LAKSHMAṆA TEMPLE (Pl II)

This is one of the largest temples at Khajuraho, being 98′ in length and 45′ 3″ in breadth. It is the only temple in which four subsidiary shrines at the four corners and the processional frieze on the *jagatī* survive to this day. The temple has been dedicated to Vishṇu. The intact basal platform depicts hunting scenes, processions of elephants and horses, and soldiers armed with a variety of weapons. The Lakshmaṇa temple has yielded some of the best sculptures of Hindu medieval art. The three famous sculptures of the Indian Museum, namely, 'woman with child,' 'woman writing letter,' and 'woman looking into mirror,' which were earlier wrongly assigned to Bhubanesvara, are also ascribed now to this temple on the basis of an identity of style, material, dimensions and inscribed graffiti.[3]

A Stone Inscription of Yaśovarman of the year V.S. 1011 (A.D. 954) was found amongst the ruins of this temple. It records the construction of a temple of Vishṇu and the installation of an image of Vaikuṇṭha received from one Devapāla [4]

At a distance of a few yards from this temple is a small shrine of Devī, originally dedicated to Garuḍa,[5] whose four-handed figure is depicted on the *lalāṭabimba*.

VARĀHA TEMPLE

Essentially similar in plan and design to the Brahmā and Lālaguān Mahādeva temples, the Varāha temple has a pyramidal roof resting on twelve pillars. A small portico on two pillars has been added towards the west. The temple enshrines a colossal Varāha statue which is monolithic and measures 8′ 9″ in length and 5′ 10″ in height.[6] The entire body of the Varāha is covered with multiple carvings of Hindu gods and goddesses. According to Cunningham's counting, they

[1] *E I*, Vol I, pp 137-47
[2] Dhama and Chandra, *Khajuraho* Guide, 1957, p 15
[3] Cf *A I*, No 15, p 54.
[4] *E.I.*, Vol I, pp. 123-25
[5] Cf *Khajuraho* Guide, p 16.
[6] *A.I*, No. 15, p. 52.

number 674.[1] The statue bears a glossy lustre like that on the Nandī, referred to above (Photo 67).

MĀTAṆGEŚVARA TEMPLE

Situated at a distance of a few yards to the west of the Varāha shrine, this is a square structure with no bands of sculptures on the outer sides. It enshrines a highly polished monolithic *liṅgam*, 3′ 8″ in diameter and 8′ 4″ in height, placed on a large *gaurīpaṭṭa* (20′ 4″ in diameter). This is the only temple of all at Khajuraho which is still under worship and is highly venerated by the people.

HANUMĀNA SHRINE

A colossal statue of Hanumāna about 7′ high is enshrined in a modern structure and no trace of the original one is to be found now. The statue bears on its pedestal an inscription dated in 316 of the Harsha Era (A.D. 922) This is the oldest inscription found at Khajuraho.

BRAHMĀ TEMPLE

Built partly of granite and partly of sandstone, this temple is situated on the eastern bank of the Nimorā Tāla. It enshrines on a pedestal a *Chaturmukha-liṅga* (1′ 6″ in diameter) and not the image of Brahmā, as is popularly believed. The upper lintels of the doorway of the sanctum and the window at the back, with figures of Vishṇu in the centre, are not the original ones.[2] The temple is externally cruciform with projections on each side, while internally it is square. There is a small opening at the back and the lateral projections on the north and south have latticed windows, peculiar to Khajuraho architecture.

VĀMANA TEMPLE

The Vāmana temple, similar in plan to the Devī Jagadambe and Chitragupta temples, enshrines the image of Vāmana (4′ 5″ high). The outer surface is surrounded by only two bands of sculptures.

JAVĀRI TEMPLE (Photo 5)

This temple is similar to the Chaturbhuja temple in general plan and design. It is a gem of architecture for its remarkable proportions, *makaratorana* of twenty-four loops and the decoration of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* and *maṇḍapa* roofs. It enshrines a four-handed image of Vishṇu (head and hands broken and lost) and is surrounded by three bands of sculptures on the outer side.

GHANṬĀI TEMPLE

The Ghaṇṭāī temple was similar to the Pārśvanātha temple in plan, and was nearly double the size of the latter. Now what remains of this grand structure

[1] *A.S.R.*, Vol II, p. 427
[2] Cf. *Khajuraho* Guide, p 19

is the roof and singularly elegant and graceful pillars which are decorated with *kīrttimukhas* from whose mouths hang festoons of pearls and bells (Photo 55).

On the basis of the discovery of an inscribed image of the Buddha (Photo 59),[1] outside the temple, Cunningham believed it to be a Buddhist shrine.[2] But now, since several Digambara Jaina statues have been discovered in the interior of the temple, there remains no doubt of its Jaina origin.[3] Moreover, the upper lintel of the entrance depicts sixteen dreams of the mother of Mahāvīra like the other Jaina temples of Khajuraho.

ŚĀNTINĀTHA TEMPLE

The outer structure of this temple is modern with several cellas enshrining old images of the Tīrthaṅkaras. The main *garbhagriha* on the east enshrines an image of a Tīrthaṅkara who should be identified with Rishabhadeva on the basis of his cognizance bull, carved on the pedestal of the image. The image, which bears a glossy polish, appears to be *in situ*. Cunningham noticed on the pedestal a dated inscription of V.S. 1085 (A.D. 1028),[4] but now it is hidden under the plaster.

ĀDINĀTHA TEMPLE

This is a small temple of three chambers to which an *ardhamaṇḍapa* was added later. The temple enshrines an image of Ādinātha but it is not original The three outer bands of sculptures largely depict Hindu gods and goddesses and other familiar scenes. In pillared niches the principal goddesses of the Jaina pantheon have been sculptured. The Ādinātha temple bears close kinship with the Vāmana temple in general plan and design and the elegance of the sculptural style.[5]

PĀRŚVANĀTHA TEMPLE

This is undoubtedly superior to all the other Jaina temples at Khajuraho, both in its dimensions as well as in sculptural embellishments. It has three components, namely, *garbhagriha*, *antarāla*, and *mahāmaṇḍapa*. A small shrine has been added at the back of the cella. The sanctum proper originally enshrined the image of Ādinātha, indicated by the figure of a bull on a pedestal. The present image of Pārśvanātha was, however, installed in 1860.[6] The sculptures largely depict deities of the Hindu pantheon including Dikpālas. Fergusson goes to the extent of even suggesting that it was formerly a Vaishṇava temple and later was appropriated by the Jainas.[7]

[1] Now in Khajuraho Museum (No 450)
[2] *A.S R*, Vol II, p 431
[3] *Khajuraho* Guide, p 21.
[4] *A S R*, Vol. II, p. 434.
[5] *A.I.*, No. 15, p 58.
[6] *Khajuraho* Guide, p 23
[7] J Fergusson, op cit, Vol. II, p. 51.

Besides the Jaina temples described above there are over a dozen modern shrines which are built of older materials and enshrine one or the other Tīrthaṅkara. Other subsidiary deities and friezes with scenes of everyday life have also been given a place in these temples. All the Jaina temples are surrounded by a modern boundary wall.

DŪLĀDEVA TEMPLE (Photo 6)

This is a Śiva temple situated on the northern bank of the Khuḍāra Nālā. Cunningham, calling this temple Kunvar Maṭh, described it as 'one of the finest temples at Khajuraho.' From the word 'Kunvar' (Skt. *Kumāra*) he inferred that it was probably built by some young prince of the Chandella dynasty.[1] Comparatively small in dimensions (69′ 2″ by 40′ 3″) it has the usual five components and three bands of sculptures. Vāsala seems to have been the chief sculptor of this temple.[2] The *Śiva-liṅga* enshrined in the cella was installed by Sri Shukdeva Behari Misra, the Diwan of the Maharaja of Chhatarpur, quite recently in place of the original one.

CHATURBHUJA TEMPLE

This temple stands to the south of Jātkarī village. Unlike other Hindu and Jaina temples, this is one of the two temples facing west instead of the usual east. Similar to the Ādinātha temple in plan, it consists of a *garbhagriha*, *mahāmaṇḍapa* and *ardhamaṇḍapa*, and three bands of sculptures on the outer surfaces. The temple enshrines a colossal four-handed image of Chaturbhuja Vishṇu which stands with three bends (*tribhaṅga*). The image is 10′ 3″ high.[3] The Chaturbhuja temple has some of the best images of iconographical importance. It does not have thin friezes of sculptures on the *jaṅghā* and *adhishṭhāna*.

SCULPTURE

The sculptures of Khajuraho can be divided into three distinct groups:

(i) The SCULPTURES IN THE ROUND, found in the *garbhagriha* or the inner sanctum of the temples.

(ii) The RELIEVO-SCULPTURES, which have been carved in very high relief and present a three-dimensional effect. These are found on the outer and inner bands and in the pillared niches.

(iii) The THIN FRIEZES OF SCULPTURES in relief of varying depth, found on the *jagatī*, *adhishṭhāna* and *jaṅghā* on the exterior, and near the roofs of the *ardhamaṇḍapa*, *maṇḍapa*, and balconies in the interior. These are also found on the door lintels of the *garbhagriha*, and the *adhishṭhāna* of the sanctum inside the covered ambulatory.

[1] *A S R.*, Vol. II, pp. 436-37.

[2] The name 'Vāsala' has been repeatedly inscribed on the temple.

[3] *Khajuraho* Guide, p. 25.

The first group depicts cult icons; the second, the principal and minor gods and goddesses, Surasundarīs, amorous couples and animals; and the third, processions of animals, groups of dancers and musicians, animal fights, hunting expeditions, army movements and many other secular scenes.

The sculptures of Khajuraho are characterised by an increasingly stereotyped modelling of conventionalised forms and flexions. They are in no way comparable to the art of the classical age with high plastic sense and sensitiveness of modelling. Sharp edges, angles and the stress on horizontals, verticals and diagonals dominate the whole composition. 'Nevertheless, the art of Khajuraho surpasses even the medieval school of Orissa in revealing the sensuous and many sided charms of the human body. Inspired by an ecstatic joy of living and a consuming passion for physical beauty, the artist of Khajuraho revelled in admiring the human body from the most fascinating angles which give us fine profiles and the unusual three-quarter profiles and back views.'[1] At least in some sculptures even the classical idiom persists, particularly 'in the sensitivity of the linear movement and in the largeness and consistency of composition.'[2]

The figure sculptures of Khajuraho display a distinctive physiognomy (Photo 7). Generally the face is oval and the chin round. The nose and the lips are prominent and the eyes and eyebrows are sharply carved[3] The figure is tall and slender, but the legs are sometimes unusually long and the poses difficult and tortuous. Both men and women are decked with ornaments and jewellery and wear rich coiffures.

Right from the Gupta period the art of sculpture developed a tendency to superimpose itself over architecture and play a more dominant role. The domination of sculpture over architecture becomes complete at Khajuraho. There is hardly a place in the temples, except the *śikhara*, both internally and externally, which is without any sculptural embellishment (Photos 8, 9). The exterior walls of all the temples are usually divided into two or three bands of sculptures which surround the structure like a multi-tiered waist-band or *mekhalā* of a lady and are overlaid with sculptured groups moulded in very high relief. Besides covering the horizontal bands, the sculptures are found on every wall and pillar, on every pilaster and projection, in every niche and corner and at all the places where it was possible to place statuary. The figures of gods and goddesses of almost all the members of the Hindu pantheon, of Nāgas and Nāginīs (the serpent divinities), of Nāyikās and Apsarās (the enchanting damsels of the gods), of Sārdulās or leogryphs (the mythical animals), and of hundreds of *mithuna* couples in an endless variety of erotic moods, apart from the numerous secular scenes drawn from everyday life, present a vast panorama of sculptures of captivating rhythm and grace. Any one who casts a glance on these gorgeous temples is bewildered for

[1] *A.I.*, No. 15, p. 64.
[2] *The Struggle for Empire*, p. 658.
[3] Cf. *A.O.C.*, p. 25.

a while by the profusion of sculptures and is in a state of momentary indecision as to which particular sculpture he should give attention to. We fully agree with Smith that the crowd of figures is far more numerous than would appear from a photograph.[1] 'This *peuple de pierre*, as M. Le Bon calls it, was designed for the purpose of architectural decoration in the mass, not as an assemblage of individual works of fine art.'[2] The whole medieval tradition of architecture is characterised by the profusion of sculptures and to quote Stella Kramrisch, 'as during the early classical phase so now, once more quantity is a quality of Indian sculpture.'[3]

Cunningham ventured to count the images in a few temples. In the Kaṇḍariyā temple alone he counted 226 statues inside and 646 outside, in all 872, most of which were from 2½′ to 3′ in height.[4] Even on the body of the great Varāha in the Varāha temple, there are nearly 674 figures[5] of Hindu gods and goddesses, including Brahmā, Vishṇu, Śiva, Saraswatī, Gaṅgā, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Dikpālas and Navagrahas.

Many figures sculptured in the recesses and corners are hardly visible and some are not visible at all. As a matter of fact, the presence of some figures was compulsory at certain places and hence their depiction was conventional. The sculptures were 'not so much meant to be seen as known to be there.' There was already a preconceived image of the deity in the devotee's mind.[6]

PORTRAYAL OF LIFE

The sculptural treasure of Khajuraho is a mine of information on the social, economic and religious life of the people who built and worshipped in these temples. In his creations, the artist used his own life, the aspects of his surroundings and the extent of his knowledge and experience as his materials.[7] True, many are the images of divinities and their accessories, but man conceives his gods after his own image and paints them with the colours of his own mind. Dr. J. N. Banerjea observes with reference to the images of divinities and their accessories: 'The dress, ornaments, weapons, implements, etc., as shown on them are mostly identical with what are used by men. I have already laid stress on Varāhamihira's dictum about the close similarity between the dress and ornaments worn by the people of a country and the same shown on the bodies of the gods worshipped there (*Deśānurūpabhūsanaveśālaṅkāramūrttibhih kāryā*).'[8] The images of gods and goddesses thus furnish valuable information about the nature of the dress, ornaments, hair-styles, musical instruments, weapons of war, furniture and domestic implements which were actually used in the Chandella society.

[1] V A. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, pp. 126-27.
[2] Ibid
[3] S. Kramrisch, *Indian Sculpture*, p. 96.
[4] *A.S.R.*, Vol II, p. 420
[5] *A.S.R*, Vol. II, p. 427
[6] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vols. I & II, p 97.
[7] *J.D L*, 1928, p. 56.
[8] J. N Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography* (1956), p. 246

Besides the religious images, there are innumerable scenes drawn from secular life, executed in the thin recessed friezes of the temples. They portray various aspects of life, such as, love and hatred, happiness and sorrow, manners and habits, cosmetics and coiffures, clothes and ornaments, games and amusements, industries and professions, furniture and utensils, arts and crafts, religion and beliefs, and many other facets of the life of men, women and children in all stations of life. In representing these aspects, the Chandella artists 'attempted to be as realistic as possible judged by the standard prevalent in the country during their time.'[1] In the pages that follow, a systematic study of the material contents of the Khajuraho sculptures and an explanation of the erotic elements therein have been attempted.

[1] S. K. Mitra, *The Early Rulers of Khajuraho*, p 221

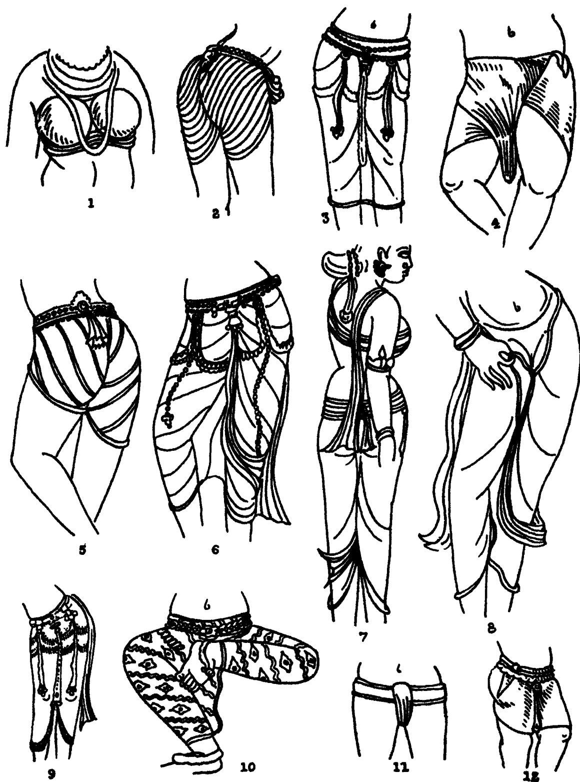


Plate III
DRESS

Chapter 3

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

IN ALMOST ALL civilizations, costume connotes more than mere clothing; it expresses some of the structure and aspirations of a society. Often the dress and ornaments tell the sex of the wearer, his or her occupation, social standing and nationality. Though seemingly mere extraneous appendages, they have entered into the very core of our existence. Dress in the past was largely conditioned by the climate of the country, the products of its industry and the nature of customs and manners. But, today, it has crossed all these barriers. This again reflects the changing social customs, the ever increasing contact with the rest of the world and the mingling of cultures. There are several notable events in the long history of India when foreigners made their way into this country and influenced the contemporary costumes by their long contact. The dresses which were popular and more agreeable to Indian taste were retained, while others were dropped; the process continues even today and will continue in the future also

Dress is an important adjunct of personality; it reflects the taste of the people, their outlook towards life, and cultural advancement. The study of dresses depicted in Khajuraho sculptures may, therefore, be both interesting and necessary in order to reconstruct the life of men and women in Central India in the Hindu medieval period. But some caution is necessary in drawing conclusions from the sculptures. We should bear in mind that the larger sculptures of Khajuraho, either in the round or in high relief, are all religious. They represent gods, goddesses and Surasundarīs. One should, therefore, leave a proper margin for idealisation and stylisation in case of heavenly

beings. Let us take for example the use of the upper garment. There are clear indications in contemporary literature that men used a variety of upper garments. In the case of ladies too, there are some indications of the use of such a garment, although in certain seasons and on some occasions, they appear to have dispensed with it. Khajuraho sculptures, however, almost invariably depict gods and goddesses without the upper garment, with the possible exception of the images of the Sun-god wearing a coat of mail and some goddesses or Surasundarīs occasionally wearing a *kañchulikā* or *kuchabandha*. The *dupaṭṭā* used by them is more for decoration than to cover any part of the body. It could not have been otherwise for the nudity of the upper part of the body in the case of gods and goddesses had become an iconographic tradition.[1] There is also a possibility that the artist, particularly in the case of the female figures, welcomed such iconographic prescriptions and even exploited them to depict the curvaceous feminine form in all its grace and voluptuousness. The iconographic texts further standardised these forms and in the face of their minute prescriptions, the artist could not be expected to take liberties. The sculptures of heavenly beings are shown wearing a variety of lower garments and jewellery. Since man conceives his gods after his own image, as already noted, we may regard the costumes of the divinities also as being used in those times.[2]

The smaller figures in the friezes, which usually depict secular themes, are unfortunately not quite distinct, in so far as the details of dress are concerned. The figures here, both of men and women, usually depict upper garments, but probably because of the smallness of the sculptures, these appear very close-fitting or almost transparent and the contours and curves of the body appear to be fully exposed.

The images of gods and goddesses wear the best type of dress, ornaments and coiffure. The artist naturally had taken the idea of these articles from kings, nobles and aristocrats. The smaller figures in the friezes, representing common men and women, obviously wear the costume the common people of the Chandella society actually used.

FEMALE DRESS

The sculptures usually depict the ladies without any garment on the upper part of the body, as noticed above. But this is not the case in all the figures. A few of them clearly delineate the edges of a close fitting jacket in the form of horizontal lines just below the breasts. The jacket is anatomical rather than gravi-

[1] Cf J. N. Banerjea, op cit., p. 295

[2] J N Banerjea has convincingly shown as to how the dress worn in a particular period influenced the costume in the sculptures of the gods and goddesses 'In the extant images of Sūrya of an earlier date,' Banerjea remarks, 'the costume worn by the God is exactly similar to the dress worn by the Kushan kings like Wema Kadphises and Kanishka (Cf the sculptural and numismatic representations of these kings with the Sūrya relief at Bhumara). The mode of presentation of the costume changes in the later sculptures and varies mostly in details according to the different localities to which they belong ' (op cit., p. 294) This is the reason why we find marked differences between the costumes of North Indian and South Indian images of the divinities.

tational, showing fully the curves and contours of the breasts. In the figures delineating such garments (Pl. III, Fig. 1),[1] the nipples of the breasts have not been shown, which is quite natural if some piece of apparel covers them. On the other hand the navel has been realistically represented. The garment, therefore, was intended to cover just the breasts, and the waist and abdomen were left exposed.

Literature furnishes numerous references to this type of garment being worn by ladies in ancient India. Rājaśekhara refers to *kuppāsa*[2] and *kañchuā*[3] as pieces of apparel used by the ladies to cover their breasts. It appears that the *kuppāsa* was not worn in all the seasons. Describing the advent of spring (*basantārambha*) it is said in the *Karpūramañjarī* that the ladies have left off wearing the *kuppāsa*.[4] Does it mean that it was worn in winter to ward off the cold ? In the *Sākuntalam*, Kālidāsa describes poetically. 'A lady seeing that her lover was gazing at her put on her bodice (*kañchulikā*) to conceal her breasts. But her feeling of passionate love made it burst, thus exposing her breasts to the great delight of her lover.'[5] This reference, together with the one in the *Karpūramañjarī*, is significant in showing that the ladies did not wear the upper garment at all times. This partly explains why even the smaller female figures of Khajuraho, in most cases, are shown without any bodice or jacket.

Another item of dress which the ladies used as an upper garment was a long and light *dupaṭṭā* which could be arranged in different ways. Usually it did not cover any vital part of the body and simply dangled sideways giving a grace and balance to the whole composition. But occasionally it was pleated and made to run horizontally across the body, with the ends hanging over the arms or the shoulders to give partial covering to the breasts.[6] It was subjected to other fashionable variations also that can be studied with the help of the illustrations. Sometimes the neatly pleated *dupaṭṭā* was disposed horizontally at the middle of the back, and its two ends passing between the arm and the torso between the breasts, were made to hang from the shoulders at the back (Photo 17) [7] In certain sculptures only one end of the *dupaṭṭā* is found arranged in the above manner, while the other is carelessly thrown on one of the arms, thus leaving one breast completely exposed (Photos 19, 20).[8] A lady depicted in the Lakshmaṇa temple has donned her *dupaṭṭā* in a sedate and dignified way. One end of its pleated length hangs gracefully from the right shoulder at the back, the other end passing over

[1] Par, lt. out; Ibid, rt out (Photo 31).
[2] *Karpūramañjarī*, I, 13, p 13
[3] *Viddhaśālabhañjikā*, IV, after 6th verse
[4] *Karpūramañjarī*, I, 13, p 13
[5] *Śākuntalam*, XIII, 32
[6] Kand., rt out; Ibid, back lt out, Viswa, lt. out, Lak, rt out, Devi, rt. out, Ibid, lt out; Chitra, back rt. out.
[7] Kand., back rt out, top band, see also Devi, back rt. out, middle band, Chitra, lt out, lower band, *H T*, Vol. II, pls XI, XVI, XX and XXXI.
[8] Kand., back rt. out, top band.

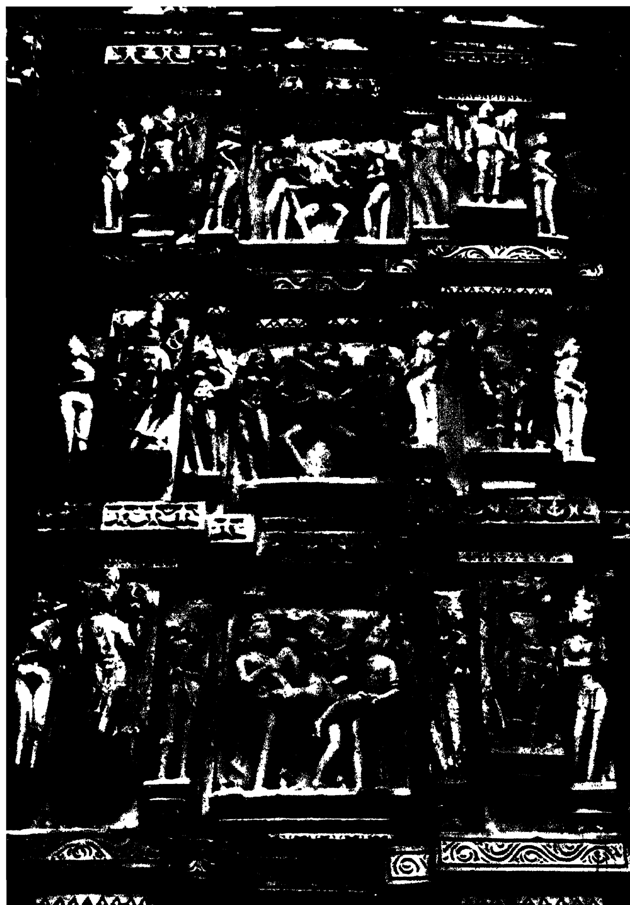


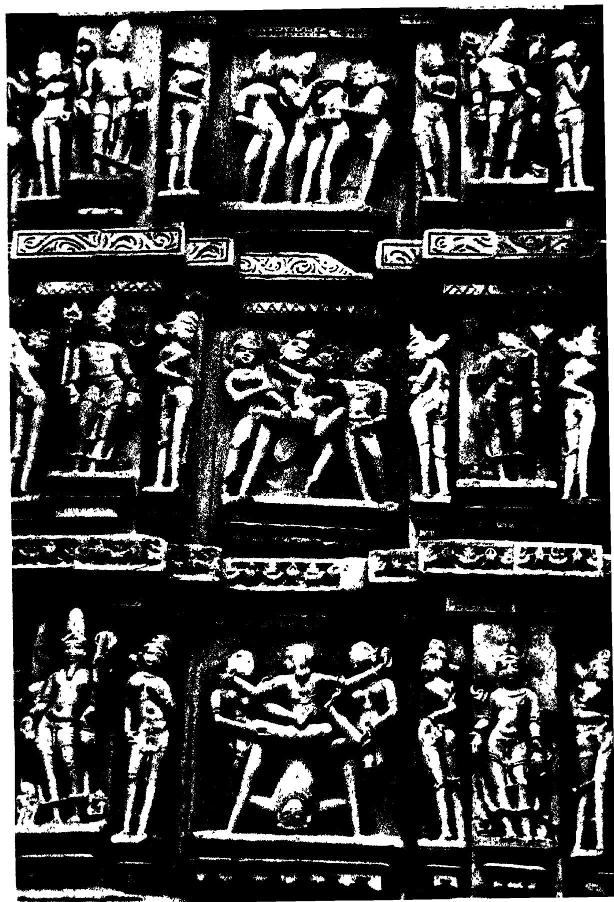
6. *Dūlādeva Temple*

Sculpture [illegible] the [illegible]anatha Temple. [illegible] Department [illegible] Government of India

[illegible] Portion of sculpture, Kandāriyā Mahādeva Temple. [illegible] Department [illegible], Government of India







9. Profusion of Sculpture, Chitragupta Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)

10. Saraswati and Vina [illegible] Facade of a Modern Temple to the Right of the Visvanatha Temple



10

11



11. [illegible] Saraswati Temple [illegible] Department of Archaeology, Government of India



Warrior, Khajuraho Museum



Mother and Child, Museum, Calcutta

the breasts and under the left arm again going over the right shoulder to hang in the front leaving a longish loop at the back below the right shoulder (Photo 35).[1] The most popular mode of putting on the *dupattā*, however, was to throw it carelessly over the arms with the pleated ends allowed to dangle on either side (Photo 10),[2] without apparently concealing the nudity of the upper part of the body for which it is used in modern times. Thus it is in only a very few cases that the *dupaṭṭā* has been used in the sculptures as a covering for the upper part of the female body.

The *dupattā* used to be a very thin and light apparel which is clear from the fact that after careful pleating it was reduced to a mere belt of cloth (as depicted in the sculptures). There are frequent references to the *dupaṭṭā* worn by the ladies as an upper garment in the literature of different times. According to Kālidāsa the garment covering the breast (*stanottarīya*) was so light that it could be displaced by the breath.[3] Bhartṛihari describes a lady as warding off the rays of the moon with the help of her *stanottarīya*.[4] In the sculptures of Khajuraho, the two ends of the scarf are often shown as fluttering in the air. This may remind one of the beautiful description of *Siśupālavadha*: 'The ladies of Indraprastha were eagerly looking at Krishṇa arriving in the city. One of them was standing at the top of her house. Her garment was fluttering in the air, appearing as if she had raised a banner with the end of her garment, in honour of Krishṇa.'[5]

The *dupattā* appears to have been a very important item of dress during the Chandella period. It was worn by the ladies of all sections of society. The costume of a danseuse was never complete without such a scarf that gave additional charm to her appearance. It appears to have been a mark of dressing respectably and was dispensed with only by women of doubtful character who indulged in drinking with men and all kinds of licentious behaviour (Photo 39).[6]

In two solitary sculptures of the Dūlādeva temple we have found the *kuchabandha* also being worn by the ladies.[7] It was a thin band of cloth across the breasts and perhaps used only to keep them in position, it was knotted at the back. The breast band, as we may call it, cannot be traced either in the smaller figures in the friezes or even in other larger sculptures of female figures.

For the lower part of the body the ladies used a *sārī* as in modern times, which was, however, worn in different ways. The Surasundarīs in most of the cases are shown swathed in a *sārī* that extends up to a little above the anklets. A few pleats from the front were tastefully gathered and tucked in at the back centre,

[1] Lak., *Mahaman.* bracket fig.

[2] Devi., lt. out., Ibid., rt. out., Kand., back rt. out. Usually this mode of wearing the *dupattā* is to be found when the lady is attending to her toilet or is in the company of her lover.

[3] *Raghuvamśa*, XVI, 17; Cf. *Ritusamhāra*, I, 7.

[4] *Śringāraśataka*, Vs. 21.

[5] *Śiśupālavadha*, XIII, 30.

[6] Viswa., *Adhis.* fr. lt. out.

[7] Dula., *Antarāla* rt. in., Ibid., cella door.

with a bunch of loose ends hanging downwards and the front pleats dangling about. This virtually made the garment look like a tight-fitting pair of drawers, giving free movement to the legs. It was kept in position at the waist invariably by a girdle, which smothered the details of the tucking at the waist (Pl. III, Fig. 9, Photo 10).[1] Sometimes the *sārī* appears to have been tucked in at the left side, where a bunch of flaring pleats in a fan-like form were allowed to emerge from beneath the girdle (Pl. XV, Fig. 5; Photo 29).[2]

The other style of wearing the *sārī* was a simple one The garment was wound round the waist in the fashion of wearing a *luṅgī* without any pleats or gathers. A lady in the Pārśvanātha temple has donned her *sārī* in this very fashion (Pl. III, Fig. 3; Photo 21)[3]. The lower end comes upto a little above the ankles and the upper end is held at the waist by an ornate girdle Although the frill is not visible anywhere, the corner of the *sārī* appears to have been tucked in at the left of the waist with the gather hanging over the girdle. The figure of a lady in the Viśwanātha temple depicts this style in a very marked manner (Photo 16).[4] The garment worn in this style must have been short in length as compared to the *sārī* worn ordinarily. But sometimes the *sārī* worn in the same fashion was of the usual length and its upper edge, instead of being tucked in only at one side of the waist, was gathered at regular intervals along the waist, causing minor prominent folds all along. A Jaina goddess has been depicted as wearing the *sārī* in this style. A heavy loose girdle with a central clasp lies round the waist over the folds in this case (Photo 11) [5]

In thin friezes depicting scenes from secular life, the ladies are seen wearing the *sārī* up to a little above the ankles The garment looks like a pair of close-fitting trousers. It seems to have been a *sārī* which was gathered in the middle of the front as usual, but the lower ends of which were taken to the back between the thighs and tucked in behind in the middle In smaller sculptures the *sārī* is sometimes depicted without the pleats.

In another form of wearing the *dhotī* the garment extended only up to a little above the knees. It was wound round the waist with the gather in the front. The garment worn in this style apparently must have been shorter in width than the ordinary *sārīs*. Both the lower ends, it appears, were drawn very tightly from the front between the thighs and tucked in at the back centre The oblique folds are indicated by rhythmical incised lines on the garment. In this style also the *dhotī* was secured at the waist by a girdle A lady in the Lakshmaṇa temple, busy in an ecstatic dance along with her male partner, wears a very narrow short cloth in the above manner which hardly covers the upper parts of her thighs and

[1] Modern temple, lt of Viswa, *Jagati*, Devi, lt out, Ibid, rt out, Chitra, back lt out, Kand, back rt out, Cf *H T*, Vol II, pls XIII-XV, XIX and XX; *H M S*, pls 27 and 30

[2] Cf *H M S*, pl 37.

[3] Par, rt out

[4] Viswa, *Mahaman* lt in

[5] Jaina couple, Śāntinātha temple

the buttocks (Pl. III, Fig. 2).[1] In another figure from the same temple (Pl. III, Fig. 5)[2] the same style of wearing the *dhotī* has been depicted. Due to the extreme lightness of the garment the contours of the buttocks are depicted prominently and numerous schematic oblique folds have been formed in the garment.

Another form of lower garment worn by the ladies in the period under review was a very close fitting pair of trousers with folds formed above the ankles. The danseuse must have found this quite convenient in swift dance movements (Photo 29).[3]

MALE DRESS

Like women, men also are depicted in the sculptures of Khajuraho without any upper garment. The reason for its absence has been explained before.[4] The larger sculptures representing gods and demi-gods, however, are always shown wearing the *uttarīya*. This is a long and thin piece of cloth, neatly pleated lengthwise and thrown over the back with the two ends dangling in the front over the arms (Photo 14).[5] This mode of sporting the *uttarīya* was identical to one of the modes of wearing the *dupaṭṭā* by the ladies.[6] In a solitary Buddha image from Khajuraho, the upper garment consisting of a thin apparel is thrown diagonally over the front part of the body, covering the left shoulder including the hand and half of the torso, while the right chest and hand are left bare (Photo 59).[7] Since the *uttarīya* in divine figures and the upper garment in the Buddha image are worn in a stereotyped manner, they lack in interest for a student of sartorial history.

It is interesting to find that the *uttarīya* has been worn by some secular figures also depicted in the thin friezes. Such figures are wearing a *yajñopavīta*, indicating their higher social status (Photo 60).[8] This garment was worn also by teachers (Photo 56)[9] and high military officers (Photo 46).[10]

Sometimes the gods (such as Rāma in the Pārśvanātha temple) are shown wearing a *chhannavīra* (Plate V, Fig. 4, Photo 65) In the Deogarh temple of the Gupta period also, the figures of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and two warriors in the lower ground of the *Anantaśāyī* panel wear the *chhannavīra*.[11]

[1] Lak, back out, *Marg*, 1957, Vol X, No 3, p 16, fig 21.
[2] *K S*, fig 69
[3] Dula, *Mahaman* entrance rt in
This dress has very close resemblance to *Chūḍīdār Pyjāmās* used by the Muslims, both males and females The possibility that this dress of Khajuraho might have been influenced by the Muslim culture cannot be ruled out.
[4] Supra, p 23
[5] Devi, back out, Kand, lt out, Viswa, lt out, Ibid, rt out, Vam, rt out, Jav, back lt out, Chitra, rt. out, Ibid, lt out, Khajuraho Museum, No 155
[6] Supra, p 24
[7] Khajuraho Museum
[8] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel
[9] Lak, ft rt sub shrine, east face
[10] Lak, *Jagati* fz lt out.
[11] *A S M*, No 70, p 34

The lower garment is worn by men in different ways. But their mode of wearing a *dhotī* differs very little from that of the ladies. Men, too, used long and short *dhotīs* with front or hind pleats. From a study of the sculptures, the front pleats appear to have been considered to be more fashionable. Sometimes the pleats were left to dangle about, both in the front and at the back, the back pleats being longer (Photo 12).[1] Men sometimes used a short cloth tied round the waist without any waist-band. One of the ends of the garment fluttered in the front. The garment covered the body only up to the upper half of the thigh (Pl. III, Fig. 4).[2]

The ascetics used to put on a *kaupīna*. It was a T-shaped strap of cloth. The upper strip was tied round the waist and the long strip hanging at the back was brought to the front, passing between the thighs, and tied tightly to the strip running round the waist (Pl. III, Fig. 11).[3]

Sometimes men and children wore a short tailored garment, very similar to the modern knickers. It was secured at the waist by a belt. Sometimes a dagger also hangs from the belt (Pl III, Fig. 12).[4] The male attendants are almost invariably shown wearing this type of lower garment.

Children in the sculptures have generally been shown entirely nude, but they invariably wear a girdle (*tadagi*) made of beaded string (Photo 13).[5] The child Krishṇa is represented as wearing a short *dhotī* with hind pleats secured by a girdle (Photo 69).[6]

ORNAMENTS

However satisfied people may be with their personal appearance, there is always a desire to add something more if possible.[7] When man was passing through the primitive stages, he decorated himself with various leaves, flowers, feathers and bone objects Gradually, as he advanced the flowers and feathers and bones were replaced by metal ornaments and jewellery Even in the excavated materials of the tumuli of pre-historic man, there are articles of adornment. The patterns of the ornaments may have been changed, the shell and terracotta beads may have been replaced by the costliest pearls and diamonds, but the passion for adornment is unaltered and the craving for embellishment is unquenched. Indians have always had a fascination for *ābhūshana* since the early ages. It is often said about the Hindus that they carry the liking for ornaments to an

[1] Khajuraho Museum, No 155

[2] Lak, back out

[3] Devi, rt out, upper band
Even in the present times the *kaupīna* is used by ascetics and persons of poor means It is found depicted in the early sculptures of Sanchi and Amravati also, which only shows that *kaupīna* was used in all ages and even survives to this day without any change

[4] Lak, ft rt subsidiary shrine, ft face This garment resembles the modern *jānghiā*, worn by lower class of people

[5] Indian Museum (Mother and Child)

[6] Panel fitted in a modern temple, south of Par

[7] J. Frederick Glass, *Industrial Arts* (1927), p. 136

excess. In the hot climate of India, it is only with the jewellery that the body is embellished and the clothes and garments are paid little attention to.

The excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa have revealed that people were using gold and silver ornaments of different varieties in the 3rd millenium B.C. Women covered their arms from wrists to elbows with terracotta or copper bangles and wore necklaces.[1] Beads of various shapes were strung together and were worn as armlets, bracelets, necklaces and girdies. They were also used as ear-studs, pendants, amulets and talismans.[2] In the Vedic age, the ornaments of men and women included rings, necklaces, ear-rings, and bangles. The material of these ornaments was gold, silver, and precious stones.[3] During the Gupta period a large variety of ornaments are encountered. They are variously known as *bhūshana*, *ābharana*, *alaṅkāra*, and *maṇḍana*. Ear-rings (*karnabhūshana*, *karnapūra*, *kuṇḍala*, *maṇikuṇḍala*) made of rubies and precious stones, necklaces (*hāra*, *muktāvali*, *hāraśekhara*) of pearls and gems, armlets (*aṅgada*, *keyūra*) of gold with gems set in them, girdles (*mekhalā*, *kanakakāñchī*, *kinkini*, *raśanā*), anklets (*nūpura*), were worn both by men and women.[4]

In the period under review, the passion for adornment not only continued but was definitely much stronger than in any other period of ancient or medieval times. The sculptures of Khajuraho bear testimony to this. They show that during the Chandella age, not only women but men also decorated the body with a variety of ornaments and jewellery.

HEAD ORNAMENTS

Women wore a stud of gold or silver on the forehead at the end of the hair-parting that always used to be in the middle. It was attached to the hair through a chain which went back along the *sīmanta* or the hair-parting.[5] In central India this type of head ornament, which is still used in this region, is known as *bor* or *borlā*.[6] In the sculptures, the *borlā* is depicted as suspended from a single or double strings of small round beads (Pl. IV, Fig. 1, Pl. X, Fig. 4).[7] Sometimes three pendants used to hang on the hair-parting, attached to the hair probably by hooks.[8]

The *śiśaphūla*[9] or *rākhdī*, as it is known today in central India was an ornament for the head that imitated a flower in shape and was worn on the forehead. In a sculpture the *śiśaphūla* of a lady resembles a lotus flower with eight petals.[10]

[1] Cf. E Mackay, *Early Indus Civilisation*, pl XXI, 7
[2] J. B. Bhushan, *Indian Jewellery, Ornaments and Decorative Designs*, p 23
[3] A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation* (1938), pp. 358-59.
[4] These ornaments can best be studied and identified in the paintings of Ajanta (Cf Gupte and Mahajan, *Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves* (1962), pls VII, XVII, XXXII and XXXIII)
[5] Devi, lt. out; Viswa, rt. out; Kand, rt out, and lt. out
[6] *J.I.A.I.*, Vol. XII, p 31.
[7] Par., rt out; Cf *A O.C.*, pl 31
[8] Kand., *Mahaman* rt. in.
[9] Cf *Prithvirāja Rāso*, 206-33
[10] Kand., *Mahaman*. lt. in


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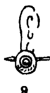
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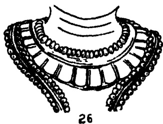
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Plate IV
ORNAMENTS

The hair and hair buns used to be tied and decorated with strings of small beads of various sizes (Pl. X, Fig. 4; Pl. XI, Figs. 2 and 4).[1] Sometimes they were spread in straight lines, but at times they were arranged in the form of suspended loops (Pl. XII, Fig. 12; Photo 11).

The ladies of rank wore a high *mukuṭa* (crown) on the head. They were of several designs. A popular *mukuṭa* of those times resembled diminishing mountain peaks, with the highest in the front centre (Pl. XII, Fig. 9).[2] Another type of the *mukuṭa* consisted of two concentric semi-circles, flanked by two cones. A lotus flower appeared behind the semi-circles, half of the former being hidden behind the latter. The contour of the crown on the whole was conical.[3] The kings appear to have used a peaked crown set with precious stones.[4]

The ladies of the rich class decorated their hair with a net of precious jewels and pearls (*muktājāla*) and inserted costly diamonds in the tresses of the hair. Over all was put on a tiara of various designs (Pl. IX, Fig. 6; Pl. XI, Figs. 2 and 3).

EAR ORNAMENTS

'The custom of perforating the ear-lobes and ears for the insertion of various types of ear ornaments is very old in India, and it is still current mainly among the women here though in much restricted manner; but in ancient and mediaeval times it was common to both men and women. The ceremony of *karnavedha* (perforation of the ear) is one of the important *saṁskāras* in the life of a twice-born, and the wearing of *kuṇḍalas* was once regarded as one of the privileges of a *Brahmacārin* (student initiate) and of a *gṛhastha* (house-holder).'[5]

A rich variety of ear ornaments is represented in the sculptures of Khajuraho. Broadly they can be classified under *kuṇḍalas* or *bālās*, *phūlajhumkās*, and *karnaphūla*.[6]

The *kuṇḍala* or *bālā* was a large or small ring inserted in the ear lobes. Sometimes double *bālās* were worn in each ear (Pl. IV, Figs. 7 and 8). Often the *bālā* appears to have been set with pearls or precious stones and a bud-shaped appendage projected from it (Pl. IV, Fig. 24).

The *karnaphūla* was a star-shaped or flower-shaped ear-ring worn by the people of all classes. Sometimes the flower was realistically imitated (Pl IV, Figs. 3-5), but occasionally it had only a faint resemblance to a flower (Pl. IV, Figs. 11, 12, 15-18).[7] A round, pointed and bud-shaped appendage also projected from them. In most of the cases this projection was only on one side, usually towards

[1] *K S*, fig. 22, *H.T.*, Vol II, pls XV and XX

[2] Dula., *Mahaman*, bracket figures

[3] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 14, fig 16

[4] Lak, *Ardhaman*. balcony fz rt in

[5] J N Banerjea, op cit, p 288

[6] These terms for the ear ornaments have been taken from the present day names of these ornaments in Madhya Pradesh (Cf. *J I A I*, Vol XII, pp. 31-32)

[7] *Marg*, Vol X, No. 3, p 40, fig 2, Ibid, p 43, fig 7, Ibid., p. 44, fig 2, Ibid, p 42, fig 6, Ibid, p 37, fig 2, Ibid., p. 35, fig. 4

the cheek, but sometimes it is found on both the sides (Pl. IV, Fig. 17).[1] In some specimens, the ear-ring is made of several concentric rings, the outer edge being decorated with pearls or beads (Pl. IV, Figs. 13 and 14).[2]

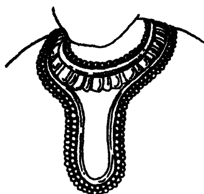
The *phūlajhumkā* also imitated a flower. From its delineations in the sculptures it appears that compared to the *karnaphūla* it was much heavier. To prevent the perforations of the ear-lobes from enlarging, the *phūlajhumkā* was fastened to the ears with a beaded string (Pl. IV, Figs 22, 23 and 25)[3] Two beautiful examples of the *phūlajhumkā* have been illustrated on Pl. IV (Figs 20 and 21). Here a number of grape-like drops are fastened with a ring. One ring is of a peculiar shape. Instead of round it is semi-circular, the circular edge being decorated with an alignment of pearls in one or two rows[4] Some ear-rings have been made with two or three concentric rings, the upper parts of which are decorated with small triangles or rectangles in diminishing order.[5] One ring has three semi-circles in diminishing order.[6] A few examples of the ear ornaments in the sculptures may be identified with the *laṭakan*,[7] i.e., a ring with a pendant (Pl. IV, Figs 2, 6 and 19).[8]

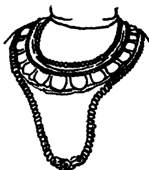
NOSE AND NECK ORNAMENTS

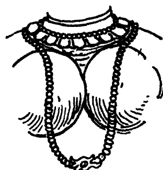
Nose-rings and studs set with precious stones are very popular at the present time. But the custom of wearing these ornaments cannot be traced back before the advent of the Muslims. Nose-rings and studs do not find any mention in our ancient literature also Possibly the custom of wearing nose ornaments became fashionable with the coming of the Muslims to India.[9] Khajuraho sculptures too, do not provide any examples of nose ornaments of any type This shows that the culture of Bundelkhand remained uninfluenced by the Muslims at least till the period when these temples were constructed

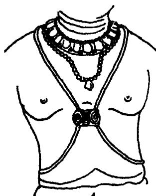
The neck ornaments delineated in the sculptures of Khajuraho reveal that a variety of necklaces were worn by the people, both men and women The neck ornaments consisted of necklaces of beads of single, double or treble rows, necklaces with pendants of rectangular pieces, and necklaces with a single string of beads hanging downwards. Some necklaces were short in length and either lay close around the neck or a little below it, while others hung low on the chest or even below it. Some gods have been depicted as wearing long hanging garlands, reaching up to or below the knees. Necklaces were worn by the people of all the

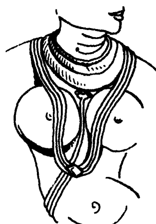
[1] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 37, fig 2
[2] Standing couple, Chhatarpur Palace, seated image, Chhatarpur Palace.
[3] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 30, Ibid, p 33, Ibid, p 37, fig 4
[4] *H I*, Vol II, pls XIX and XX
[5] Dula, *Mahaman* rt. in; Ibid, lt in
[6] Dula, *Mahaman* rt in
[7] Cf *JIAI*, Vol XII, p. 32
[8] Hari-Hara, Khajuraho Museum, Par, lt out, *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 18, fig 24
[9] 'The ornament on the nose is known by the name of *vesara* (not a Sanskrit word) and is *not to be found in early* Indian images, in late figures of youthful Kṛṣṇa and goddesses like Rādhikā and her attendants, this ornament and its variants sometime appear' (J N. Banerjea, op cit., p. 289).

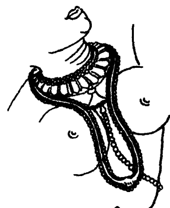

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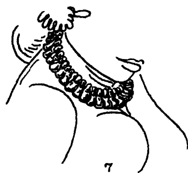

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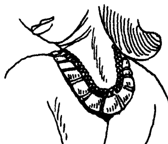

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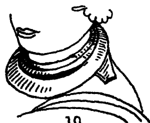

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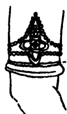
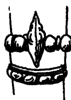
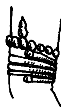

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Plate V
NECKLACES, *CHHANNAVIRA* AND ARMLETS


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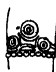
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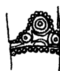
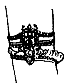
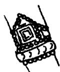
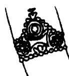
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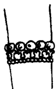
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Plate VI
ARMLETS

classes—by royal personages as well as saints, masters and servants, artists and teachers, soldiers and hunters, dancers and musicians and women of every rank. A careful study of the necklaces depicted in the sculptures enables us to classify them into the following types:

1. Necklace with a string of single row of beads or pearls (*ekāvali*)[1] worn by men[2] and women[3] both. It was of two kinds. One was worn close to the neck and the other was long and hung downwards with a central clasp. The Jaina Gomedha couple in the Śāntinātha temple is shown wearing both these types of necklaces (Pl. V, Figs. 2 and 3; Photo 11).[4] Sometimes two small *ekāvalis* were worn at a time close to the neck (Pl. IV, Figs. 27 and 28).[5]

2. Long necklace hanging low over the chest. It was made probably of two rows of beads of precious stones or pearls, running parallel to each other, between which ran a string of twisted wire which held the beads or pearls in position (Pl IV, Figs. 26 and 27; Pl. V, Fig. 6).[6] This type of necklace also was worn by men[7] and women[8] both and appears to have been one of the most popular types to be found depicted in the sculptures of Khajuraho. Sometimes the twisted wire in the middle was dispensed with and two rows of beads ran side by side parallel to each other (Pl. V, Fig. 1).

3. A *hāra* of four strings of beads or pearls, connected together by flower-shaped metal pieces at regular intervals (Pl. IV, Fig. 28).[9] It was generally worn by the ladies[10] but rarely by the men.[11]

4. Necklace, worn by men and women both, consisting of rectangular (Pl. IV, Fig. 26), leaf-shaped (Pl. V, Figs 1-4 and 6) or square pendants held together by a twisted cord or beaded string.[12] In case of the ladies this type of necklace had one more addition. There used to hang a long beaded string from it, passing between the breasts (Pl. V, Fig. 6).[13] Sometimes this string is found in double rows,[14] and in a few sculptures it consists of even three rows of beads.[15] In case of men this addition is not to be found.

[1] In Central India the necklace of a single row of beads is called *ṭeoṭā* (Cf. *J.I A I*, Vol XII, p. 32).
[2] *A O C*, pls II, 30, 31 and 42.
[3] Ibid, pls 14 and 31, *H T.*, Vol II, pl XIV, *I A H*, pl 27.
[4] Śāntinātha temple, rt in.
[5] Seated image, Chhatarpur Palace, standing couple, Chhatarpur Palace
[6] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 40, fig 2, seated image, Chhatarpur Palace, Devi, rt out.
[7] *A O C*, pls 19 and 22; *K S*, fig 70
[8] *H T*, Vol. II, pls XIV and XV, *A O C.*, pl 19, *I.A H*, pl 27, *K S*, figs 20, 24, 26, 70, 71 and 74.
[9] Standing couple, Chhatarpur Palace
[10] *H.T*, Vol. II, pl. XXII, *A.O.C*, pl. 54
[11] *H T*, Vol II, pl. VI.
[12] In a paper entitled 'Observations on some Chandella Antiquities' (*J.A S B*, Vol. 48, 1879, p. 287), Smith refers to some Chandella finds including a few gold leaflets, each pierced with a hole about the size of a barley corn, found in fields in Khajuraho These small gold leaflets are most probably the square pendants of the neck ornaments.
[13] Devi, rt. out; see also *A.O C.*, pls. 15, 31 and 43.
[14] *A.O.C.*, pl. 54, *I A H.*, pl. 27
[15] *A.O.C.*, pl. 57, *K.S.*, fig. 29

5. Necklace consisting of beads, thick twisted wire and long tubular pendants, worn by the ladies and the gods.[1] Sometimes the necklace was made up of a number of bud-shaped pendants (Pl. IV, Figs. 27 and 28).

6. A *tonk* or *hansalī* (Pl. V, Fig. 10),[2] worn by a female figure in the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple.

The back views of the sculptures show that the necklaces were knotted at the back (Pl. V, Fig. 9), but most of them appear to have been without any joint and could have been worn only by passing them over the head (Pl. V, Figs. 7 and 8).

The necklaces enumerated above were generally worn all together particularly by the richer people. This was not the case with the persons of moderate means.

ARM ORNAMENTS

Ornaments for the arm include armlets worn on the upper arm and bracelets worn on the wrist. In the Chandella period such ornaments also, like other ornaments, were used by men and women both. The sculptures of Khajuraho present numerous varieties of armlets and bracelets (Pls. V-VII).

(i) *Armlets* (*angada*; *keyūra*)

The armlets depicted in Khajuraho sculptures range from the simpler varieties to complicated ones. The simpler armlets consisted only of beads of various sizes, while the complicated ones were sufficiently broad and heavy and were of different designs and shapes. Broadly they may be divided into the following two categories.

1. The armlets with a single row of beads. Such armlets were made with a number of beads strung on a cord. The beads were usually round (Pl. VI, Fig. 5), but sometimes round and cardamom-shaped beads were arranged alternately (Pl. VI, Fig. 10). In some examples bud-shaped appendages projected from the round beads upwards and downwards from alternate beads (Pl. V, Fig 13). Sometimes there was only one appendage projecting upwards (Pl. VI, Figs. 4-6 and 12) or a single leaflet strung among other beads (Pl. VI, Fig. 3). In a few cases the armlet is made of flower-shaped beads strung on a cord (Pl. VI, Fig. 22).

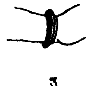
Very often a severely plain armlet, sometimes double, and occasionally single, was also worn along with the beaded armlets (Pl. VI, Figs. 4-6, 10 and 25).

2. Heavy cylindrical armlets (Pl. VI, Figs. 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 14-19 and 24). These were decorated with beaded borders, circlets, concentric circles and floral designs. Some of them had raised rims (Pl. VI, Figs. 2 and 11), while in others the place of the rim was taken by a beaded border (Pl. VI, Figs. 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23 and 24). Some armlets appear to have been made of metal plates which were embossed with various designs (Pl. VI, Figs. 7 and 14).

[1] *H.T.*, Vol II, pl. XXII.
[2] Cf. *J.I.A.I.*, Vol XII, p. 32.


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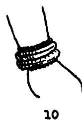

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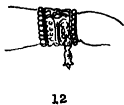

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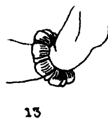

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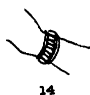

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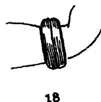

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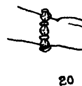

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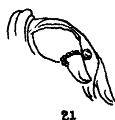

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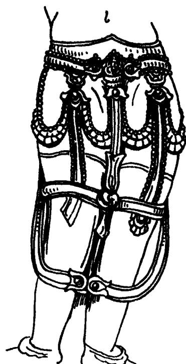

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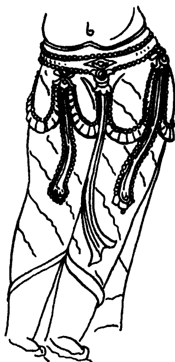

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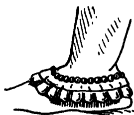
Plate VII
BRACELETS AND FINGER-RINGS



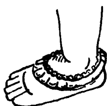
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Plate VIII
GIRDLES, ANKLETS AND TOE-RING

The armlets described in category 2 have a uniform lower edge while the other one projects upwards into a cone. They are generally broad and heavy and are worn by gods and goddesses in the majority of the cases. They were also used by males and females of the upper class of society. They invariably appear to have been set with precious stones. The simpler variety of the armlets, grouped in category 1, were common among persons of average means. They were worn by householders, musicians, dancers, hunters, labourers, and so on.

An important feature of the armlets depicted in the sculptures of Khajuraho is that often the armlets worn on the two arms are of different designs (Photo 11) [1]

(ii) *Bracelets* (*valaya*)

Bracelets of various designs adorn the wrists of men and women depicted in Khajuraho sculptures. The one quite common is a beaded *kangana*. In some of them, the beads are round or cylindrical and large (Pl. VII, Figs. 8, 11 and 13),[2] while in others they are like cardamoms or shaped like rat's teeth (Pl. VII, Figs. 6, 17 and 19).[3] Sometimes the round and cardamom-shaped beads in the *kangana* are arranged alternately (Pl. VII, Fig. 2). Very often the bracelet consists of a ring with a groove, set with a series of pearls (Pl. VII, Figs. 5, 14 and 19).[4] In some specimens the *kangana* consists of a plain rim with both of its edges bordered by beads (Pl. VII, Fig. 16).

A very common variety of the *kangana* depicted in the sculptures of Khajuraho is severely plain, its cross-section being conical (Pl. VII, Figs. 1, 3 and 10) or round (Pl VII, Fig. 18). Sometimes two plain *kanganas* were joined together along the rim (Pl VII, Figs. 10 and 18). The double bracelets with a central clasp are found in the case of beaded *kanganas* also (Pl. VII, Fig 15).

Some bracelets are very broad and elaborate. The nucleus of which they are made is a rectangular metal piece, bordered by beads and decorated with various designs (Pl VII, Figs. 9 and 12). Sometimes a pendant was suspended from them (Pl. VII, Fig. 12). Among the broad bracelets one type consists of several circlets and beaded or tubular edges with two or four tubes running breadthwise from one circlet to another (Pl. VII, Figs. 4 and 7). In the Mother and Child sculpture of the Indian Museum, the bracelet of the lady is very broad and covers about half the fore-arm (Photo 13). It is made up of ten circlets of flat plates with the front circlet decorated with beads. In some bracelets of this style the beaded decoration is found on all the circlets.

(iii) *Finger-Rings* (*anguliyaka*)

Finger-rings were undoubtedly used both by men and women of Chandella

[1] Cf. Śāntinātha temple, rt in, Gomedha couple
[2] Cf *A O C.*, pls 17, 37 and 58.
[3] *A O.C*, pls. 12, 22, 30 and 35, *H T.*, Vol II, pl XIII; *I.A H*, pl 27
[4] Similar bracelets have been shown being worn by male and female figures depicted in the sculptures of the Gupta temple at Deogarh (Cf. *A S M.*, No 70, pl. XXIX, figs 24, 25 and 27).

society, but since the ornament is very small in size, it is generally very difficult to recognise it in the sculptures in most cases. In a few sculptures, however, the finger-rings are clearly delineated on the thumb (Pl. VII, Figs. 21, 23 and 24) and the index finger (Pl VII, Fig. 22). Sometimes the rings are worn simultaneously on the thumb and the ring-finger (Pl VII, Fig 24) or on the thumb, the index finger and the little finger (Pl VII, Fig 25). The finger-rings are quite simple, either plain or beaded. Only in the case of a few thumb-rings the ornament is set with a bezel or jewelled boss at the top (Pl VII, Figs 21 and 23).

GIRDLES

The girdle or *mekhalā* has been depicted in the sculptures as being worn by persons of all classes and both the sexes. The girdles worn by the gods, goddesses and the ladies of rank are of superior quality, while those worn by the common people are comparatively inferior. The girdle is an object for adornment of the person, but in addition to its decorative value it kept the lower garment in position. In literature it is variously known as *raśanā, sārasanā, mekhalā, kāñchī,* and *saptaki.*[1]

Elaborate girdles as depicted in Khajuraho sculptures consist of an ornate belt with a central clasp worn on the waist. From the belt hang jewelled strands with pendants on the thighs and buttocks, making several suspended loops. Some beaded tassels also hang from the belt between two loops (Pl. VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).[2] In the figures of gods and goddesses the girdles appear to be of a stereotyped nature.

In a few sculptures, however, some interesting features are seen in the girdles. In the Javārī temple, from the girdle of a lady two chains ending in bells hang on the thighs, obviously to produce a tinkling sound as the lady walked[3] Sometimes the girdle of a lady consists of only a belt and suspended loops and the hanging tassels are absent[4] The waist-belt was both single and multi-stranded.[5]

The girdle of ordinary persons—soldiers, musicians, hunters, etc—was only a single string of beads, without loops or tassels (Photos 33, 52, 53 and 54).

ANKLETS AND TOE-RINGS

Anklets are variously known in literature as *mañjīra, tulākoṭi, nūpura, haṁsaka,* etc.[6] The anklets were worn by men and women of every class, although in a few sculptures they are dispensed with. The variety of anklets ranges from plain to ornate ones Usually they consisted of a beaded string and a series of

[1] *A S M M*, p 112
[2] Par, lt out, Kand, back out, Chitra, lt out, Viswa, rt out, Ibid, lt out, Vam, lt out, Jav, rt. out standing couple, Chhatarpur Palace
[3] Jav, lt out
[4] Cf Kand, back out
[5] Cf Khajuraho Museum (Hari-Hara), Dula, *Mahaman* rt in
[6] Cf *A S.M M*, pp 114f



14 *Lovers Offering a Flower, Devi Jagadambe Temple*



15 *Lady Squeezing Her Hair, Viswanatha Temple*

16 Lady with the Cosmetic cup, Viśvanātha Temple

17 Lady Spotting Her Forehead, Kandariyā Mahādeva Temple



16

17

19 Lady at Her Toilet, Kandariya Mahadeva Temple

20 Lady Applying Vermilion, Devi Jagadambi Temple (Photo Raymond Burnier)





19



[illegible] Lady [illegible] Parsvanatha temple



[illegible]



square pendants (Pl VIII, Figs 3 and 4) Sometimes they were also worn in pairs [1] Sometimes the anklet was made of two or three rows of beaded strings with or without a boss in the front.[2] At other times the anklet looked like a twisted cord with the usual boss (Pl. VIII, Fig. 5)

The dancers wore bell-anklets which were made with small metal shells (*kinkinis*) filled with shot, strung on a cord Such anklets produced a sweet tinkling sound when the dancer walked or danced In several sculptures a danseuse is shown as tying the bell-anklets on her feet before performing her dance (Photo 31) [3]

Toe-rings were also worn both by men and women like the other ornaments. They do not show any rich variety in their design, but are quite simple, either plain[4] or beaded (Pl VIII, Fig. 6)

SACRED THREAD

The gods and twice-born persons wore the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*) The sacred thread of the ordinary people was plain and simple, but that of the gods was composed of pearls and precious jewels [5]

ORNAMENTS OF CHILDREN

The parents who themselves were great lovers of ornaments, adorned their children also with jewellery The ornaments of children were light and less complicated, usually of a single string of beads or pearls. They included armlets, necklets, bangles, girdles and anklets (Photo 13) [6]

[1] *H I* , Vol II, pls XV, XX and XXX

[2] Khajuraho Museum, Nos 34 and 111 Khajuraho Museum gate

[3] Par , lt out , see also Chap 6, p 73

[4] Śāntinātha temple, rt in , Khajuraho Museum gate

[5] Śāntinātha temple, rt in , Kand , rt out , Viswa , back out , Chitra , back out and lt out , Cf also *Kumārasambhava*, VI, 6 Kālidāsa uses the term *muktāyajñopavīta* for such sacred threads
Such types of *yajñopavītas* are a common feature of the gods in sculpture and painting They may be seen in the sculptures of Amravati, Ajanta paintings and Gupta sculptures and also in the traditional sculptures of the present times

[6] Mother and Child (Indian Museum), panel fitted in a modern temple to the north-south of Par , depicting Krishṇa-*līlā* scenes

Chapter 4

HAIR-STYLES

THE STUDY of the modes of hair dressing in different periods of a country's social history is both fascinating and illuminating. Since the hair-styles are conditioned by the aesthetic consciousness of the people, the leisure at their disposal, and the desire to live not only to exist but to enjoy, such study may be of deep sociological significance.

India is a land of hair-styles. Probably in no other country in the world has so much imagination, thought and artistic genius been applied to the art of hair dressing. These are delineated in the sculptures and paintings, and Sanskrit literature is full of descriptions of different types of hair-do. 'The braid of woman has always rightly been a lovely theme for the poet to eulogise and for the sculptor and painter to portray with gusto.'

The Chandella sculptors appear to have taken particular care to depict attractive hair styles that are both elaborate and varied. Undoubtedly they must have taken their inspiration from the modes of hair dressing practised by men and women in their times. The apparently excessive elaboration in some of the coiffures in Khajuraho sculptures might appear fantastic and impracticable at first glance, but a careful study shows that they are not purely imaginary. As we shall see in the following pages, it is possible to understand how each variety of coiffure, even the most elaborate one, could have been actually devised and worn, and how they can be adopted with advantage even by the present day fashion world.[1]

[1] Recently, Veena Purohit has published her book *Indian Hair Styles* with a good number of photographs of the models She has selected specimens from Indian sculptures and paintings and copied the old forgotten coiffures with remarkable success Her selections include Khajuraho sculptures also This further supports our contention that the coiffures depicted in Khajuraho sculptures are not fantastic , only the art is forgotten.

The sculptures of Khajuraho show that men and women both wore long hair and arranged it in a number of ways. The coiffures of the ladies are naturally more elaborate, attractive and varied, while the hair-styles of men are limited to a few types.

The elaborate coiffure presupposes that the tresses were carefully washed, nourished with various oils and ointments and combed regularly. There are many sculptures in the temples of Khajuraho which depict a lady as squeezing out water from her tresses (Photo 15).[1] After cleaning, the hair was left loose to dry. In the Lakshmaṇa temple a lady has been depicted as gently combing or oiling her hair which has been brought forward over the left shoulder (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 5). There are no scenes, it is true, in which a lady is actually shown making her coiffure, but in a few sculptures she is depicted as adjusting or giving finishing touches to it with the help of a mirror.

After oiling and combing, the coiffures of the desired shape appear to have been made with the help of ribbons and the occasional use of doughnuts and false hair. When the hair had been made, a few beaded strings were generally tied or suspended at appropriate places as additional decoration. Flowers were occasionally also used to heighten the effect.

There are innumerable types of hair-do depicted in Khajuraho sculptures. In this maze of bewildering variety, however, it is possible to discern certain types of which the remaining appear to be variations with a few changes here and there. We propose to confine ourselves to the consideration of the main types only.

FEMALE COIFFURE

The ladies of the richer class tried almost every possible mode of dressing their long hair and appear to have never tired of exploring newer varieties. Following are some select examples:

1. Pl. IX, Fig. 1:

The hair has been combed back, neatly turned halfway and twisted, thus making a short tail resting at the back of the neck. The loose ends of the hair have been carefully placed below the tail and tied with a ribbon with flowing sashes.

2. Pl. X, Fig. 5.

This coiffure is more or less similar to No. 1, but here the tail is slightly smaller and rests on the nape. Instead of a ribbon, the hair is tied with two rows of beaded strings.

3. Pl. IX, Fig. 2:

This is an attractive coiffure of a Nāyikā. The hair has been combed back and tied in the centre. The flowing hair is then divided into three strands. The middle

[1] Viswa., rt out; Kand, lt. out and rt out; Vam., rt. out, Jav., back out.

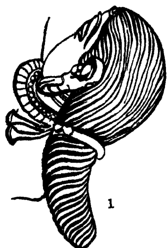












Plate IX
FEMALE HAIR-STYLES



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Plate X
MALE AND FEMALE HAIR-STYLES

strand is twisted and rolled around the remaining strands and the loose ends stuck below. With the two side strands is made an attractive knot lying on the nape of the neck. A beaded string lies along the hair-parting and the back knot. Two flowers flanking the hair-parting are inserted in the hair on the head.

4. Pl. IX, Fig. 3:

In this coiffure, the hair has been combed backwards without any parting in the centre. The long flowing hair appears to have been divided into two strands. The one on the right has been given a little twist to make a loop. The left strand is gathered up and is coiled to make a small chignon resting on the back of the neck. The head is decorated with beaded strings.

5. Pl. IX, Fig. 4:

The coiffure of this lady is simple yet dignified. The hair, as usual, has been combed back, leaving a set of six ringlets at the sides in front. The flowing hair is divided into two parts, turned half way, and then tied behind into a prominent knot which is quite clear in the back view of the lady illustrated on Pl. X, Fig. 1.

6. Pl. X, Fig. 4:

In this hair-style the lady has made a flat bun at the back of the neck. The flowing hair is twisted and coiled in the centre round an ornament. A ribbon is tied above the bun to give firmness and an attractive look to the coiffure. A variation of this type is illustrated on Pl. XIII, Fig. 2.

7. Pl. X, Fig. 2:

In the coiffure illustrated here the lady has gently combed her hair backwards leaving small curls near the forehead. The entire hair is arranged in a semi-circular doughnut lying on the nape. The coiffure is otherwise very simple, without any additional embellishment.

8. Pl. XI, Fig. 4:

The coiffure of this lady is extremely rich and profusely decorated with jewellery. The long hair appears to have been divided into three equal strands and each is coiled and pinned one upon the other. A flower *veni* is probably suspended from the lowest bun, while beaded strings are woven with the hair everywhere.

9. Pl. XII, Fig. 25:

In this illustration the coiffure consists of gathered hair made into loops and placed towards the left. For making such coiffure, the hair was apparently combed back and tied in the middle. The flowing hair was converted into loose loops by coiling it near the left ear.



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Plate XI
FEMALE HAIR-STYLES

10. Pl. XI, Figs. 1-3:

In these illustrations the long tresses have been done up into an elongated chignon at the back. A *veni* of flowers or a chain invariably encircles the chignon and is suspended from it. Occasionally the chignon is also embellished with beaded strings and there is a small coronet at the top of the head.

A variation of this type is illustrated in Pl. X, Fig. 3, where the chignon is less elongated but more pointed.

11. Pl. XII, Fig. 24:

This type of hair-style was meant for very long hair. The hair was combed upwards and tied in the centre. Later the tresses, which were decorated with precious stones, were coiled, thus making diminishing rolls.

A variation of this type is illustrated in Pl. XII, Fig. 27.

12. Pl. IX, Figs. 5 and 6:

Sometimes the ladies enjoyed simply brushing back the hair and leaving it free (Fig. 5). That such kind of a hair-style was intentional is quite clear from Fig. 6 where the lady is shown putting on a coronet.[1]

The hair-styles of the ladies depicted in Khajuraho sculptures are generally very elaborate and obviously much care and attention was paid in arranging them. Jewellery and flowers were lavishly used to embellish the coiffure.[2] The hair was carefully parted in the middle, making a *sīmanta* which was decorated with ornaments. Sometimes a circular pendant (*chaṭulatilaka*) joined with a chain was placed centrally on the parting of the hair. The pearl-net decoration appears to have been a dominating feature in the Chandella coiffures, while the hair mode comparable to a curled-up snake is more popular in the Gurjara Pratīhāra sculptures from Rajasthan.[3] In Chandella as also the Gahaḍavāla sculptures, 'there is very great stress laid on the *chikura*, the *chūrnakuntalas*, the *alakas*, the soft and small curls forming the boundary of the forehead.'[4]

We could not find in Khajuraho sculptures any example of a long hanging *venī* that is so popular today. The ladies of the Chandella society always preferred to make buns, chignons, coils, doughnuts and loose knots, rather than intersecting *venī*. In most of the cases, the elaboration to the coiffure was made near the nape of the neck.

The variety of coiffures delineated in the sculptures presupposes that the *purdah* system was unknown among the ladies of the Chandella society. The system of *purdah* was introduced by the Muslims in Northern India and consequently the

[1] The hair-knot loosened in amorous sport is a charming theme of the poets In the *Raghuvamśa* (IX, 67), the king withdraws his arrow aimed at a peacock, as its tail, opened out in joyous dance, resembles closely the dishevelled hair of his sweetheart with fragrant flowers interspersed in variegated hues.

[2] Similar use of flowers and pearl decoration can also be seen in abundance in the colourful paintings of Ajanta.

[3] Cf. Sivaramamurti's paper in *Indian Hair Styles*.

[4] Ibid.



Plate XII
MALE AND FEMALE HAIR-STYLES AND HEAD-DRESS

practice of keeping the head covered went a long way in discouraging the art of hair dressing. It has now been only partially revived after a lapse of several hundred years, due to the impact of Western civilization which discouraged the *purdah* system.

MALE HAIR-STYLES

Men were equally interested in attractive hair-styles. But in variety, as pointed out earlier, they always lagged behind their female counterparts. Unlike the coiffure of the ladies (Cf. Pl. X, Fig 5), men of the upper class made an elongated chignon at the back, which was slightly raised upwards, instead of being placed on the nape (Pl. X, Fig. 6). The common people naturally had little time to devote to the arranging of their hair They simply knotted it at the back or the side making a big chignon (Pl. XII, Figs. 18 and 26)

The soldiers also tied their hair smartly into chignons of various shapes. Sometimes they combed the hair upwards and coiled the long tresses at the top of the head (Pl XII, Fig. 13). Sometimes, the hair was combed backwards and the chignon was made by coiling the hair at the nape (Pl. XII, Figs. 14 and 17). Occasionally, the elongated chignon was decorated with a single string of beads (Pl. XII, Fig. 16). In a few cases, the soldiers preferred to have the hair loose The tresses were combed back and turned half way. The ends of the hair were secured beneath the mass of hair somewhere near the nape An ornament was often inserted in the tresses to produce a pleasing effect (Pl. XIII, Fig. 1).

The hair-style of a hunter resembled a conical cap (Pl. XII, Fig 19). Men of other vocations also coiled up their hair in diminishing rolls (Pl XII, Figs. 6 and 11) and decorated them with pearls and beads

The ascetics had a different mode of hair dressing Some of them had shaven heads but those who had long hair, coiled the tresses around the head which very much resembled a turban (Pl XII, Fig. 20). A similar style of hair dressing may be seen in the sculptures of Bhubaneśvara (Pl. XII, Figs. 23 and 28). A peculiar type of hair-style of ascetics consisted of a large chignon at the top and two lateral chignons (Pl. XII, Fig. 5), sometimes slightly raised upwards (Pl. XII, Fig. 15). In some cases the long hair appears to have been coiled at the top, while with one strand at the back a round bun was made at the nape of the neck (Pl. XII, Fig. 30). The representations of the coiled up hair in diminishing rolls are abundant in the sculptures of Bhubaneśvara also (Cf. Pl. XII, Fig. 31). Occasionally the long tresses of the ascetics were divided into two equal strands and were intersected in a way so as to make two lateral chignons without any at the top (Pl. XII, Fig 8). This mode of hair dressing also closely resembled a turban.

BEARDS AND MOUSTACHES

From a study of Khajuraho sculptures it appears that although the majority of the men were clean shaven, a fairly large number grew beards and mous-


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Plate XIII
HAIR-STYLES, BEARDS AND MOUSTACHES

taches, an interesting record of which is preserved in the sculptures. The beards and moustaches are mostly found on the divine figures, but they do give some idea regarding the custom of those times.

The representative types of beards are illustrated on plate XIII. The beards were usually long and tapering (Pl. XIII, Figs. 3, 5 and 6). In the figures of Agni the beard is knotted (Pl XIII, Fig. 4), but it is difficult to say if such beards were worn by the common people. Sometimes the beard was closely trimmed all along or it was combed and neatly set with the ends of the hair secured at the appropriate place (Pl. XIII, Fig. 7). Sometimes, it was a mass of small curls or ringlets spread all over the chin (Pl XIII, Fig. 8).

The representative types of moustaches appearing in Khajuraho sculptures are also illustrated on plate XIII (Figs. 4, 5, 8-12). Sometimes the moustaches were short with pointed ends turning upwards (Figs. 5 and 8). Sometimes they were long and thin with the pointed ends going upwards up to the cheeks (Fig. 11). In a few cases the ends of the moustaches were given a sharp curve (Fig. 10), while in others they were almost curled up (Fig. 4) and the part along the upper lip was often shaved (Fig. 12).

Chapter 5

COSMETICS

THE DESIRE to appear beautiful to others is a basic urge of mankind. It is more prevalent among ladies. In ancient and medieval India, both men and women used cosmetics to look more attractive and feel refreshed. Khajuraho sculptures provide numerous illustrations of *prasādhana* depicting young ladies at toilet. They are variously shown as decorating their face and forehead with coloured and fragrant pastes and powders, putting red lead in the hair-parting, applying collyrium to the eye, tinting the lips, colouring feet and palms, and so on. Men also appear to have used cosmetics, although the sculptures do not show any scene of male toilet. These representations give some idea of an important aspect of the civilization of those times. To gain some knowledge as to how medieval Indians, both men and women, effected their toilet, we discuss here different items of toilet and the use of cosmetics.

FOREHEAD DECORATION

Ladies in ancient and medieval India used to decorate their forehead with different types of marks (*tilaka*).[1] The custom still survives, right from the backward village women to the posh Westernised urban ladies, who put various marks on the forehead, using red, yellow, green and black coloured pastes or powders. Although the decoration of the forehead is common among ancient nations, it had a special significance for a Hindu lady. It was a compulsory mark of married bliss, its absence generally indicating

[1] Cf. *Karpūramañjarī*, Act II, p. 73; *Pṛthvīrāja Rāso*, 206-33 (*Raṭṭatilakāvalī*), *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vss. 597, 740

widowhood.[1] Even in times of sorrow and danger for the husband, a Hindu wife would not decorate her face with red lead (*sindūra*) nor would she put on ornaments or other objects of personal embellishment.[2] Men too, particularly of the higher and richer class, occasionally decorated their forehead with the *tilaka* mark.[3] This practice is true to the present day, especially in the case of Hindu ladies. Some of the more orthodox among the Brahmin males too still follow this traditional practice, thc absence of the mark indicating that 'the daily ablutions have not been performed, that a person is still in a state of impurity or that he is still fasting.'[4]

In the sculptures of Khajuraho, both men and women are seen with forehead marks. Relying on pure statistics the fashion appears to have been less popular among males. Their decoration marks are also limited. Flying male figures in the Dūlādeva temple have sometimes a small circle around a dot[5] and sometimes a rectangle[6] placed vertically on the forehead. In some secular scenes, the male figures have either a vertically placed eye-shaped mark,[7] or a mark resembling a drop.[8] Men also placed a circular dot on the forehead.[9]

The ladies had a great fascination for the *tilaka*. Like males, they also put circular dots,[10] a rectangular[11] or an eye-shaped mark,[12] or the mark resembling a drop[13] on the forehead between the eyebrows. Besides these, a few other marks were also common. Sometimes, inside a drop-shaped mark, they made a circle [14] Some ladies liked to put a U-shaped mark, the upper opening being closed by a horizontal line.[15] A dancing lady in the Dūlādeva temple has a beautiful forehead mark. It consists of double squares, the inner spacc being relieved by a four-petalled flower.[16]

[1] Cf. the Rewah Stone Inscription of thc time of the Kalchuri king Karṇa, dated in Chedi year 800, corresponding to A D. 1048-49 While referring to Karṇa's conquest of the Gurjara country a passage reads 'when king approached (the Gurjara country), tears mixed with collyrium flowed on the cheeks of the Gurjara women, living (in the neighbourhood) and colour marks, indicative of their non-widowhood slipped, as it were, from their foreheads' (*E I*, Vol XXIV, p 107)

[2] Cf. *E. I.*, Vol I, p. 129, Vs 41 (Khajuraho Stone Inscription of Yaśovarman of V S 1011, A D 954)

यस्यानने शरद्खण्डशशिप्रसन्ने
कोप व्यनक्ति हृदयस्थमरिप्रियाणाम्
सिन्दूरभूषणविवर्जितमास्यपद्म-
मुत्सृष्टहारवलय कुचमडल च ॥

[3] *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs. 740.

[4] Abbé J A Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (Oxford, 3rd Ed), pp 334-35

[5] *H.M S.*, pl 49.

[6] Ibid., pl 50

[7] Viswa, *Prad* back in, upper band.

[8] Ibid, *Prad* lt. in, upper band

[9] Ibid, *Prad.* back in, upper band

[10] *H.M S.*, pl 22

[11] Dula, *Mahaman* back in, Ibid, *Antarāla* rt, Khajuraho Museum No 351 In last case there is a vertical line inside the rectangle

[12] *A.O C*, pl. 43, Viswa, *Prad* back in, upper band, Khajuraho Museum gate rt, river goddess.

[13] Kand, rt out, middle band, Viswa, *Prad* lt in, upper band, Ibid., lt out, middle band

[14] Viswa, *Prad* back in, transcept passage, rt. lower figure.

[15] Ibid., *Prad* back in, upper band.

[16] Dula., *Antarāla* lt.

Different types of dyes were used for marking the *bindī* or *tilaka*. Generally *sindūra* was used for the purpose.[1] Sometimes the forehead was dotted with sandal dust.[2] Besides the *tilaka*, the use of *ṭikulī* also appears to have been in vogue. A sculpture in the Devī Jagadambe temple represents a lady with a flower-shaped casket. She is shown in the attitude of picking out something from it. Since her forehead is bare, most probably she is taking out one of the *ṭikulīs* from the casket to place on her forehead.

The dyes and *sindūra* were also kept in containers and the forehead signs were made with the help of a *bindī*-stick (*śalākā*) or finger. In some sculptures,[3] a lady may be seen probably with a *śalākā* and colour container (Photo 16). She is about to mark her forehead. In the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple, a lady is seen spotting her forehead with her finger (Photo 17)[4]. A mirror was used to ensure that the mark was put in the correct position.[5] Whenever the ladies are seen marking their forehead, they are shown wearing ornaments with the hair well arranged. This shows that the forehead decoration was the last item of the toilet.

FACE DECORATION

As in modern days the ladies of ancient and medieval India also were familiar with scented dust and powder that they applied to their faces. This added loveliness to their complexion and made them look younger and more delicate. The dust or powder was prepared from sandal, the use of which for decorating the face has been, incidentally, referred to in a Chandella epigraph. While eulogising Nannuka, this record says that he 'playfully decorated the faces of the women of the quarters with the sandal of his fame.'[6] In the sculptures of Khajuraho, there are many scenes that depict a lady as gently applying powder to her face with the help of a puff, holding a mirror in one of her hands (Photo 18).[7] In the Adinātha temple, a lady holds a cosmetic container in the left hand and with the right applies something, probably powder, on her cheek.[8] After the powder was applied, some ladies further embellished the face by laying small shining stars on the cheeks. A lady in the Devī Jagadambe temple has a line of dots on her face, from the temple to the chin.[9]

USING VERMILION

A line of vermilion (*sindūra*) in the parting of the hair (*sīmanta*) was an absolute necessity, a *sine qua non* in the case of all married women whose hus-

[1] Cf *E I.*, Vol I, p 129, Vs 41, *P C*, p 164

[2] Cf *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs 739, p. 144

[3] Viswa *Prad* rt in, Kand, back rt out, top band Similar themes are found in Bhubaneśvar temples.

[4] Kand, back rt. out, top band.

[5] Cf Lak, back out, as an example

[6] *E I*, Vol I, p 125, Vs 10: यशश्चन्दनक्रीडालंकृतदिक्पुरन्ध्रिवदन :

[7] Viswa, rt out, Kand, lt. and rt out; Ibid, *Prad* lt in; Chatur, rt out; Vam, lt out; Par., lt out.

[8] Adi, back out, middle band

[9] Devi, lt. out, lower band.

bands were alive.[1] A married Hindu lady even today sticks to this tradition with the same rigidity. There are repeated representations in Khajuraho sculptures of a lady standing with a mirror in her left hand, applying *sindūra* in the hair-parting with the right, which has been brought over the head from behind (Photo 19).[2] Vermilion was applied at the appropriate place with the middle finger of the hand (Photo 20).

DECORATING THE EYES

The ladies of Khajuraho seem to have been very particular about the embellishment of their eyes. They gave careful attention to the make-up of eyelids, eyelashes and eyebrows. There are repeated representations in the sculptures in which a lady is shown staining her eyes with collyrium (*añjana*).[3] It was applied to the eyes with the help of an antimony rod or *añjana śalākā* (Photos 21 and 22).[4] Antimony rods presuppose the existence of collyrium pots. In some sculptures the lady is actually shown holding it in one of her hands and applying *añjana* with the other.[5] While applying collyrium, the ladies sometimes held a mirror in the left hand.[6] But mostly they did not need the mirror at all, naturally because by regularly staining their eyes, their hands became accustomed to the act [7] Sometimes even when they hold the mirror in the left hand, they do not make use of it.[8] It appears that the ladies of the upper strata of society regularly oiled and brushed their eyebrows in order to make them appear shining black and tidy. The dancing ladies probably painted them also. The eyebrows of Nāyikās and Apsarās in the sculptures are made either bow-shaped or extended towards the ears, with fine ends gently curving upwards.[9]

STAINING THE LIPS

It is always an ardent desire of ladies that their lips should be crimson red The poets have compared ideal lips with ripe *bimbā* fruits The redness, of course, was a natural gift in beautiful ladies, but it was accentuated by external means also. For example, the ladies stained their lips with *alaktaka* (lac-dye).[10] *Tāmbūla* (betel leaf) also made the lips vivid red There are two significant sculptures from

[1] From Khajuraho Inscription of V S 1059, A D 1002 (Vs 13), it is known that married women were called *Sīmantinī*

[2] Kand, back rt out, Devi, lt out, lower band, Lak, back out, Jav, back lt out

[3] Suśruta talks very highly of the merits of collyrium It alleviated the burning and itching sensation, removed local pain, increased range of vision, furthered the growth of beautiful eyelashes, cleansed the eyes by removing unhealthy secretions, made them more wide and graceful and imparted brilliant lustre (*J I S O A*, Vol VIII, p 104)

[4] Par, rt out, Vam, rt out, Ibid, lt. out, Kand, *Mahaman* lt in, Chitra, rt out, Devi, rt out; Viswa, lt out, Adi, back out, Cf *Karpūramañjarī*, Act IV, p 184

[5] Chitra, rt out, Devi, lt out.

[6] Kand, *Mahaman* lt out, Devi, rt out, Ibid, lt out, Adi, back out

[7] Chitra, rt out, Devi, lt out.

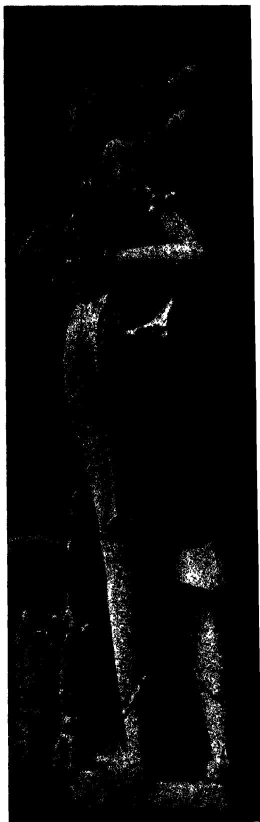
[8] *A O C*, pl 57, Par, rt out

[9] *H M S*, pls 36, 39, 42 and 43, Coomaraswamy, *Viśvakarmā*, VII, p 68, *K. S.*, pls 71-74.

[10] *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs. 113.



23



23 *Lady Staining Her Lips, Dūlādeva Temple*

24 *Lady Staining Her Lips, Devī Jagadambi Temple*



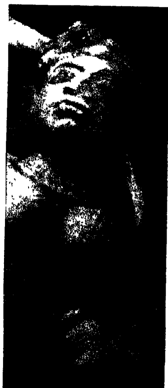




Lady [illegible] Indian Museum, Calcutta

Lady [illegible]
(Photo [illegible])





28 Lady [illegible] Temple

29 A Dancing Lady, Dūlādeo Temple

30 A Dance Scene, Lakshmana Temple
(Photo: O. P. Khanna)



Khajuraho which portray the painting of the lips. The one from the Dūlādeva temple (Photo 23)[1] depicts a lady standing, decked with ornaments and jewellery, and wearing an attractive coiffure. She is tinting her lower lip with a small lip-stick held in the left hand In her right hand, which hangs downwards, she is holding an unidentified object which may be the case of the lip-stick The other sculpture, which is in the Devī Jagadambe temple (Photo 24),[2] also depicts a fashionable lady colouring her lips In this example, the lady has picked up the colour from a flower-shaped casket held in the left hand and is staining her lips with the finger of the right The contents of the casket is probably rouge [3]

COLOURING SOLES AND PALMS

Fashionable ladies coloured the soles of the feet, the palms and fingers with *alaktaka* and crushed henna (*mehandī*) giving them a lovely, lasting, scarlet hue. This was a common practice in ancient times Women during the Gupta period coloured their soles which 'reddened the flight of steps as they walked down to the edge of water of tanks'[4] For the 10th century, Damodaragupta informs us that the majority of the ladies used *alaktaka* to colour their feet [5]

There are several sculptures in Khajuraho temples in which a lady is depicted standing on one leg and colouring the sole of the other which has been turned upwards at an acute angle (Photo 25) [6] She is usually attended by a toilet attendant holding a cosmetic bag or a cup full of dye The use of henna can be guessed from the design of a flower appearing on the palms of some Nāyikās [7]

USE OF FRAGRANT PASTES

Applying sweet perfumes, powders and pastes to remove body odour, to feel fresh and look charming, was a common practice of both men and women in ancient India Such perfumes and powders were obtained from aromatic wood resins, flowers, etc [8] Dāmodaragupta refers to the application of *kuṁkum* and sandal paste by rich ladies and gentlemen on their bodies [9]

In a few *prasādhana* scenes of Khajuraho, this important item of toilet can also be recognised [10] In all the depictions the sculptors have favoured to show

[1] Dula, back lt out, middle band

[2] Devi, lt out

[3] Cf *J I S O A*, Vol VIII, p 106 Women in the Gupta period besmeared their lips with a kind of yellowish powder called *lodra* dust which was prepared from the *lodra* wood (B S Upadhyaha, *India in Kalidasa*, p 207)

[4] B S Upadhyaya, op cit, p 207

[5] *Kuttanimatam*, Vs 7, p 3

[6] Pat, lt out, *H I*, Vol II, pl XV, Lak, lt out, Viswa, lt out, Dula, back out, Chatur, lt out, *A O C*, pl 58

[7] Viswa, *Prad* lt in, upper band, *H I*, Vol II, pl XXII

[8] Cf *J I S O A*, Vol VIII, pp 102-4, Patil, *Cultural History from Vāyu Purāna*, p 89 According to Kālidāsa people anointed their bodies with various pastes (*anulepana* and *angarāga*) prepared of *Uśīra* grass (*Andropogon muricatum*) or of sandal (B S Upadhyaya, op cit, pp 205-6)

[9] *Kuttanīmatam*, Vss 63, 102, and 739, pp 14, 21 and 144 According to contemporary bardic literature scented oil was also applied to the body (Cf *Prithvīrāja Rāso*, 129-65)

[10] Kand, rt out, Ibid, lt out, Ibid, *Prad* lt in, Lak, lt out, Viswa, rt out, Pat, lt out

the ladies applying paste, but this does not mean that the men did not use fragrant ointments on their bodies.

TATTOOING

Tattooing the different parts of the body is an universal practice. This holds good particularly for the aboriginal communities. 'Not one country,' says Darwin, 'can be named from the Polar regions in the North to New Zealand in the South in which the aboriginals do not tattoo themselves.'[1] The practice gradually crept into the civilized societies. In the beginning tattoo marks were associated with superstition,[2] but later they became one of the means of personal embellishment, although the element of superstition still persisted. According to a survey made by Captain C. E. Laurd, Superintendent of Ethnography in Central India, the tattooing is restricted to ladies in Bundelkhand and men are practically never tattooed.[3] Females tattoo numerous kinds of marks consisting of clusters of dots, triangles, circles, cross devices of necklaces, bracelets, *jhūmara* (ear-ring), dot on the forehead, chin or nose and deer, peacock, tiger, elephant, scorpion, fish, etc.[4]

The evidence of Khajuraho sculptures on this practice is significant. Some of the sculptures show tattooed scorpions,[5] lizards[6] and fish[7] on the bodies of women. In on case is any male figure seen with tattoo marks. The marks on the bodies of women are found only on their thighs. It is obvious that decoration was not the aim of tattooing, as the thighs were supposed to be covered with garments. Possibly, the ladies got the figures of the scorpion, lizard and fish tattooed on their bodies according to some superstitious belief. It is still believed in Madhya Pradesh and other parts of the country that the wearer of the figures of a scorpion or lizard becomes immune to the poisonous effect of these insects while the figure of a fish brings fortune.

MIRRORS AND COSMETIC CASKETS

A mirror was an indispensable article for *prasādhana-kalā*. The uses of the mirror were many. They were looked into for giving the final touches to the

[1] Quoted in William Crooke, *Things Indian* (1906), p. 460

[2] Brahmin women believe that after death they will be able to sell the ornaments tattooed on their bodies and to subsist on the proceeds (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol XII, 1955, p 211) In Bundelkhand also, where Khajuraho is situated, the following verse is often recited

चतुर नार गहनो गढ़ो सुगढ़ लियो अपने अग ।
उतारे से उतरे नहीं सो गयो जीव के सग ॥

The word *gahano* has been used here in the sense of tattoo marks The Gonds and Baigas tattoo the figure of the monkey god Hanumāna for acquiring strength, and Bhīma's club for improving digestion (Ibid) Most Hindu women in Karnataka tattoo on their bodies the figures of *Śankha*, *Chakra*, and *Padma*, the different attributes of Vishṇu, so that no evil may befall them Sometimes the tattoo marks are snakes, lizards and scorpions It is believed that the wearer of these marks is protected from the wrath of the poisonous insects and reptiles (*I A*, Vol XXVI, p 126)

[3] *I.A*, Vol. XXXIII, pp 219-20

[4] Ibid, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 221ff.

[5] *H M S*, pl 27, Kand, back lt out, Ibid, back rt out, Ibid, *Prad* rt in, Adi, lt out, Devi, lt out.

[6] Viswa, *Prad*. rt in; *J U P H S*, Vol III (N S), p 150

[7] Devi., lt. out

facial decoration (Photo 26),[1] used for fixing the flower in the hair at the right place,[2] for adjusting the forehead ornament,[3] for putting vermilion in the hair parting,[4] for painting the eyes with collyrium,[5] adjusting the coiffure,[6] combing hair,[7] or for simply admiring the beauty of one's own face.[8]

Different cosmetics, as mentioned above, were kept in caskets (*mañjūshā*). There are depictions of various types of caskets in Khajuraho sculptures. They were flower-shaped (Photo 27), round (Photo 28) or square.[9] Collyrium was kept in a miniature bottle-shaped container (Pl. XXII, Fig. 8) [10] The containers for *sindūra* or *ṭikulī* were round,[11] flower-shaped[12] or square[13]. It appears that *śalākā* for staining the lips was kept in a narrow case (Photo 23).[14] While spotting the forehead, or colouring the soles, lac-dye was kept in a small bowl (Photo 16).[15]

TOILET-ATTENDANTS

Attendants used to assist ladies in their toilet. The toilet-attendants depicted in Khajuraho sculptures are usually males.[16] In a scene in the Pārśvanātha temple,[17] one *prasādhaka* attends on a lady who is applying collyrium to her eyes. In another in the same temple,[18] an attendant assists a lady who is colouring her feet. He stands with a cup full of dye. He has a beard and small moustaches. A leather bag hangs from his left shoulder. Sometimes the attendants stand with a mirror in the hand (Photo 25)

[1] Lady with Mirror, Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vam, rt out, etc
[2] Chatur, lt out, etc.
[3] *H M S*, pl 24, Viswa, lt out, Lak, *Prad* rt in
[4] Devi, lt out, Lak, back out, Jav, back out, Kand, back rt out
[5] Kand, *Mahaman* lt out, Devi, rt out, Adi, back out
[6] Devi, ft rt out, Viswa, ft rt. out; Ibid, lt out
[7] Viswa, rt out
[8] Chitra, lt out, Viswa, rt out, Ibid, back rt out
[9] See also the chapter on 'Furniture, Utensils and Other Household Materials'
[10] Vam, rt out, upper band
[11] Chatur, back out, middle band
[12] Devi, lt out
[13] Adi, lt out, *H M S*, pl 35
[14] Dula, back lt out.
[15] Viswa., *Prad.* rt in, *A O C*, pl 58
[16] Kālidāsa also refers to male toilet-attendants (*prasādhakāḥ*) in the *Raghuvaṁśa* (B S Upadhyaya, op cit, p 208)
[17] Par, rt out, *A.O C*, pl 57
[18] Par, lt out, *A O C*, pl 58

Chapter 6

MUSIC, DANCE AND PAINTING

KHAJURAHO sculptures depict a joyous society in which men and women were happy. They appear to have been optimistic and forgetful of the future. They loved to live, and devised and discovered such means as made their life still happier. Their innate aesthetic sense, accentuated by wealth and prosperity, apparently found expression in music, dancing, painting, sculpture, architecture and other fine arts.

Among the vast ocean of sculptures in the many Khajuraho temples, there are innumerable scenes depicting music and dancing. The enormous number, as also the variety of representations, speak highly of the zealous interest that the people took in the cultivation of these arts A minute study of the sculptures will give a fairly good idea of these twin arts in the Chandella period. The mute sculptures, with their natural limitations, reveal that both vocal and instrumental music was popular.

VOCAL MUSIC

The human voice has a natural appeal and the power to express depth of feeling, howsoever complex. Vocal music is the basis and very source of all musical instruments. It has always been given a higher status than instrumental music in India In view of the rich variety of musical instruments delineated in the sculptures of Khajuraho, there can be no doubt that the art of singing was largely cultivated by the people and that it was much advanced Contemporary or near contemporary works on *Sangīta* confirm this fact.[1]

[1] *Sangīta Makaranda* of Nārada (8th-11th centuries) enumerates 93 *rāgas* and divides musical sounds into five classes according to the agency of production *Nārada Śikshā*, probably composed between the tenth and the twelfth century, shows considerable

From the sculptures it is not possible to gather details of vocal music, but some of them do depict scenes where vocal music is apparently going on. In one of the friezes of the Viśwanātha temple,[1] a lady flanked by two instrumentalists is shown sitting in a pose which suggests the singing of some *ālāpa* or prelude to a *rāga*. The singer has placed the palm of her left hand on her left ear. This is a familiar position of vocalists while singing. The instrumentalists are playing on a *vīnā*, *ḍhol*, *mridaṅga* and a pair of cymbals. In another scene also,[2] a lady is depicted sitting almost in the same posture (in this case one hand is on the ear, while the other is on the knee) and is accompanied by flute and cymbal players. In both the scenes, the singer is a lady. This gives the impression that vocal music was more popular with the fair sex, which is in conformity with the evidence of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.[3]

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Information regarding instrumental music can be gathered from the depiction of musical instruments in various contexts, which are extremely rich, both in beauty and variety of forms. For convenience, we can divide them into percussive (*ānaddha*), pneumatic (*sushira*), vibratory (*tatam*), and resonatory (*ghana*) classes.[4]

PERCUSSIVE INSTRUMENTS

Under the percussive class of instruments come various types of drums. In Indian musical systems the drum has a unique place. 'It provides tonic to which all the other instruments must be tuned.'[5] Compared to the numerous types of drums used today, the Khajuraho specimens are much limited in number. It is significant that the *tablā*, an important instrument of the drum species in its present form, is unrepresented in the Khajuraho sculptures. Two varieties of drums in these sculptures can be identified as the *mridanga*[6] and the *ḍhol*, on the basis of their forms. In general appearance they are not very different from each other, except that the former has a protuberance in the middle, while the latter is almost

advance on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* in its *rāga* system Jayadeva wrote his lyrical composition *Gīta Govinda* at the end of the 12th century *Sangīta Ratnākara* of Śārṅgadeva (A D 1210-1247) deals with the whole range of musical form and composition and gives a very detailed account of ancient musical theory *Sangīta Samayasāra* (c. A D. 1200) and *Brihadeśi* (c. A D. 1000) are two other notable works of this period The definition of *rāga* given in *Brihadeśi* was taken up by Somanātha and included in his *Rāgavibodha* (H A. Popley, *The Music of India*, pp 13-16).

[1] Viswa, *Prad* fz back in.

[2] Viswa, *Adhs* fz. back in; Cf Lak, *Prad* fz back in

[3] According to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata, 'women are gifted by nature with a melodious voice and men with muscular ability,' therefore women should sing and men should play on the musical instruments (O. Goswami, *The Story of Indian Music*, p 101)

[4] Cf *Śabdakalpadruma*, IV, word *vādyam*, p 332.

[5] H A Popley, op. cit, p 122.

[6] *Mridaṅga* or *pakhāwaja* features very prominently in Indian myths and legends According to the mythological stories it was invented by god Gaṇeśa after the style of Śiva's *damaru*. Later on it was from the *pakhāwaja* that other drum species were evolved. Cf Atiya Begum Fyzee Rahman, *The Music of India* (1925), p 53

cylindrical and has comparatively large faces. The *mridangas* of Khajuraho[1] are long barreled, truncated on both the faces which are covered with parchment (Pl. XIV, Figs. 6 and 7).[2] The parchments are tightened by strings or leather braces. Sometimes the string-lines look like a network (Pl. XIV, Fig. 7),[3] and sometimes they are made to overlap one another (Pl XIV, Fig. 8)[4] The *mridanga* almost invariably accompanied a dancer along with other instruments It was played solo too.[5] In one sculpture the *mridanga*-player is shown controlling two instruments simultaneously.[6]

The drums with a straight exterior, or cylindrical sides (instead of being barrel-shaped), have been called *ḍhol* by us. There are numerous representations of *ḍhols* in Khajuraho sculptures. Their faces are covered with skin and are stretched by strings or leather braces, running horizontally (Pl XIV, Figs. 17 and 21)[7] or obliquely (Pl. XIV, Figs. 13 and 14).[8] A single band of leather (Pl. XIV, Figs. 16 and 21), or four strings (Pl. XIV, Fig. 14) pass round the centre of the shell. They tightened up the instrument to the desired pitch.

The *ḍhol* was played both by men and women by striking with the fingers,[9] but in the Ādinâtha temple[10] a lady is shown playing the instrument by tapping it gently with a small stick Like the *mridanga*, the *ḍhol* was usually played by causing percussion on both the faces, but in some cases only one side of the instrument was used (Pl XIV, Fig. 4, Pl XV, Fig. 6)[11] While standing, the *ḍhol*-player hung the instrument round his neck (Pl. XIV, Fig 5)[12] or the shoulder in the *upavīta* manner (Pl. XV, Fig. 3).[13] The *ḍhol* is often found associated with temple rituals and worship.[14] The drummer depicted on a subsidiary shrine of the Lakshmaṇa temple (Pl. XIV, Fig. 5) appears to be a temple-drummer He is absorbed in his performance with half closed eyes and rhythmic movements of the legs.

There was also a variety of smaller drums, used in the temple rituals. In form, they were like the *ḍhols*, but they were played quite differently. The drummer used to lift them on the palm of his left hand to the level of the shoulders, and strike with a small stick held in the right hand on only one face of the instrument (Pl XV, Fig 7).[15]

[1] Chitra, fz lt out; Viswa, fz back rt out, Ibid, lt and rt out, Lak, *Prad* fz lt in
[2] Lak, *Prad* fz rt in.
[3] Lak, *Prad* fz rt out, Chitra, *Jagatī* fz ft out.
[4] Lak, cella inside
[5] Viswa, rt out
[6] Chitra, *Jagatī* fz ft out
[7] Lak, *Prad* fz lt in, Ibid, rt in
[8] Subsidiary shrine, ft rt of Lak, cella door, lower lintel
[9] Subsidiary shrine, back rt of Lak, back out
[10] Adi, lt out
[11] Chitra, cella door, lower lintel
[12] Subsidiary shrine, back rt of Lak, back out
[13] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel, third figure from rt
[14] Ibid, third and fifth figures from rt
[15] Ibid, fourth and fifth figures from lt

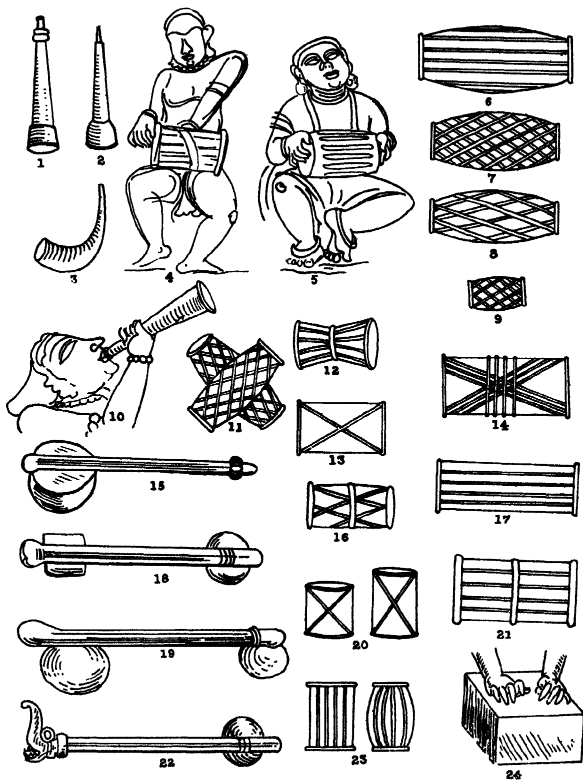


Plate XIV
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS





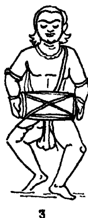










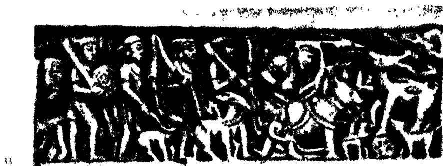
Plate XV
DANCE POSES AND PLAYING OF DRUMS

31 *Danseuse Tying Bell-anklet, Pārśvanātha Temple (Photo, Shama [illegible])*

32 *Lady with a Paint-board, Viśvanātha Temple*



33 *Hunting Scene, Khajuraho Museum*







34 *A Jaina Guru and Elephant Fight, Khajuraho Museum No 1029*

35 *Lady Playing with a Ball, Lakshmana Temple*

One variety of the drum, not found in such abundance as the *mridanga* or the *ḍhol*, resembles the modern *huruka*,[1] an instrument popular with the low caste communities. In appearance it almost looks like a *ḍamaru*, but much larger in size (Pl. XIV, Fig. 12),[2] and has the usual two faces covered with skin, tightened by leather braces. While playing, the instrument was squeezed by one hand in the middle and played by the other.

In the Viśwanātha temple a peculiar type of instrument is depicted. It is like a box in shape and is played like the *tablā*, by causing percussion with both the hands (Pl. XIV, Fig. 24).[3] It accompanies a *vīnā* in this particular scene.

In certain representations of drums in Khajuraho sculptures, one may recognise the early form of the modern *tablā*. In a scene in the Javārī temple (Pl. XIV, Fig 23)[4] a person is playing on two drums simultaneously One of these has a straight exterior, while the other has a protuberance in the middle, presenting a convex contour. One served the purpose of treble and the other the bass.

PNEUMATIC INSTRUMENTS

Of the tubular instruments, the sculptures of Khajuraho depict the flute and the *śahnāī* The flute is one of the most ancient instruments of India with a pastoral association [5] It is generally manufactured of bamboo and is blown from one end It has six or seven holes (sometimes eight) covered by the left finger tips and right knuckle joints, and supported by the thumbs below. The flutes of Khajuraho are not vertical but are horizontal).[6]

The flute appears to have been a favourite instrument of the ladies, at least the sculptures depict it to be so. It was played together with other instruments as an accompaniment to the dance.[7]

The other wind-instrument depicted in the sculptures resembles a *śahnāī*, which is strictly a nasal instrument.[8] It has been represented as a pipe, the straight tube of which is narrow at the top but widens at the bottom (Pl. XIV, Figs. 1, 2 and 10) [9] It was probably considered to be a good instrument for musical orchestras.[10]

[1] Viswa, fz ft lt out, Ibid, fz rt out, Jav, *Ardhaman* fz rt in

[2] Viswa, lt fz rt out

[3] Viswa, fz back rt out

[4] Jav, *Ardhaman* fz rt in In a fragment of lintel showing music and dance found at Pawaya (Gupta period) a lady is depicted as playing on two drums, placed vertically But here, both the drums have protuberances in the middle and are identical in shape (Radhakumud Mookerji, *The Gupta Empire*, 1947, pl XIX) For a similar depiction of two drums in a miniature temple of Muktesvara compound, see K C Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar*, fig 114

[5] Cf O Goswami, op cit, p 307

[6] Lak, *Jagati* fz rt out, *H M S*, pls 25 and 50, C Sivaramamurti, *Indian Sculpture*, pl 37, Cf the dance sculpture in the Paraśurāmeśvara temple of Bhubaneśvara depicting flute, cymbal and drum players

[7] Lak, *Adhis.* fz rt out, Chitra, fz. ft lt out, Viswa, fz ft rt out, Ibid, fz lt out, Lak, cella door, Ibid, fz *Prad* lt in

[8] Cf A H. Fox Strangways, *The Music of Hindostan* (1914), p 78

[9] Jav, fz *Ardhaman* rt in, Viswa, fz. rt. out, Chitra, cella door, Kand, fz *Prad* back in, Lak, fz. rt out, Ibid, cella door

[10] Viswa., fz ft. rt. out

Usually it was played as an accompaniment to dances,[1] but its presence in temple music[2] and military bands[3] is also not wanting in the sculptures. One variety of this instrument was very long and reached up to below the knees, if held vertical.[4]

Some sculptures depict a horn-shaped trumpet used purely for military purposes (Pl. XIV, Fig. 3) [5] Conch-shells were also sounded by blowing with the mouth. They are generally used on occasions of religious or quasi-religious ceremonies or to mark the end of worship in the temple During the period under review also conch-shells were associated with religious rituals and temple-dances. They accompanied a temple-dance along with the gong (*ghaṇṭā*) which too was associated with the religious ceremonies.[6] There is, however, no scene depicting a conch-shell being in use in secular dances or musical orchestras

VIBRATORY INSTRUMENTS

Of the stringed-instruments, the *vīnā* figures most prominently in Khajuraho sculptures. It has been depicted in the hands of goddess Saraswatī,[7] Apsarās[8] and Vidyādharas[9] and also as an accompaniment to the dance.[10] It provided a good background music to a singer[11] and could be played even solo [12] The *vīnā* was played both by men and women Khajuraho *vīnās* have either single (Pl XIV, Fig 15)[13] or double gourds (Pl XIV, Fig. 19),[14] the upper one being smaller. Usually both the gourds are round but in some cases the lower one is cubical (Pl. XIV, Fig. 18).[15] Those with double gourds resemble the so-called *Saraswatī-vīnās* of South India.[16] The stem of the instrument was sometimes decorated with a beaded pattern. In a few more artistic specimens the lower end of the stem is shaped like a *vyālamukha* (Pl XIV, Fig. 22) [17] It is difficult to say anything about the system of frets, the number and nature of strings and the adjusting pegs, etc., on the basis of the sculptural delineations of the *vīnā*. While playing the instrument, it was held slanting against the shoulder. We could not find any example in which the instrument is held horizontally across the knees of the player In Khajuraho sculptures, except the *vīnā*, no other instrument of the class of stringed-

[1] See footnote No 9 on p 65
[2] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel
[3] Dula, fz rt out, Ibid., *Adhis* fz back out
[4] Devi, cella door, Khajuraho Museum gate, rt. upright
[5] Khajuraho Museum, No 1368
[6] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel, Viswa, fz rt out
[7] Lak, rt out, upper band, Devi, cella door, lower lintel, Khajuraho Museum, No. 824
[8] Vam, back out, upper band; Lak, *Mahaman.* rt in, Ibid., bracket figs; Ibid, rt out, Ibid, *Prad* lt in
[9] Dula, rt out, *H T*, pl. XXVII.
[10] Lak, rt out, Viswa., fz lt out; Ibid, rt out
[11] Viswa., fz *Prad* in
[12] Par., back rt out, Vam., back out.
[13] Vam, back out
[14] Lak, rt. out
[15] Lak, *Prad* lt in
[16] Cf O Goswami, op cit., pl X
[17] Dula, rt. out; *H.T*, pl. XXVII

instruments could be noticed. The same is the case with the sculptures decorating the Bhubaneśvara temples.[1] This may show that the *vīnā* was the only popular, stringed-instrument in use at Khajuraho during the age of the Chandellas.

RESONATORY INSTRUMENTS

Of the resonatory instruments, Khajuraho sculptures depict gongs, cymbals, and castanets. The gong was a round and moderately thick disc of metal. It was suspended by a rope and struck with a wooden hammer.[2] Like conch-shells, the gong was also associated with temple rituals and worship. It has been invariably depicted on the door frame of the cella, in the hands of a man shown striking it with a hammer. It is also found, along with other musical instruments, in the temple-dances and worship scenes.

The sculptures depict two kinds of cymbals; one is of a small size and the other is larger. The smaller variety (*mañjīra*) consists of two cups (of brass or bronze), connected by a small string and struck together to produce a ringing sound.[3] According to authorities on music, cymbals 'are by no means easy to play, and experts produce with them most intricate and delicate movements, all in perfect harmony with the time of the music.'[4] In the sculptures the *mañjīra* is seen generally accompanying a *mridanga* or *ḍhol* In a majority of the cases it is found to be one of the instruments of the orchestra accompanying a dancer. The other variety of cymbals is sufficiently large in size, like those played at the present day Muharram ceremony of the Muslims and is usually found in temple-dance scenes [5] It was also played in orchestras.[6]

Castanets have also been depicted in Khajuraho sculptures. At one place this consists of two pairs of flat bars of metal or wood, held in both the hands and struck together with the help of the fingers.[7] Other kinds of castanets might also have been known to the people, but we could not find any other variety in the sculptures.

Musical instruments were played quite independently, apart from being played to assist a dancer or a vocalist. In the Viśwanātha temple a scene depicts a musical orchestra in which the musicians are shown playing on the drum, cymbals and a pipe-like instrument.[8]

THE DANCE

Dancing is a 'progression of co-ordinated and rhythmic movements of the body and limbs, usually to the accompaniment of vocal or instrumental music,

[1] Cf *Indian Studies*, etc, Vol II, No 2, p 342
[2] Viswa, *Man* balcony fz rt in, Chitra., *Antarāla* lt in; Lak, *Adhis.* fz back out
[3] Chitra, cella door; Ibid, fz ft lt out, Viswa, fz. ft. lt out and back out, Lak, *Prad.* fz. lt. in.
[4] H A Popley, op cit, p 127
[5] Viswa, fz rt out.
[6] Viswa, fz. back rt out.
[7] Lak., rt out; *K. S*, pl. 69.
[8] Viswa., *Adhis.* fz. back rt out.

the beating of drums or clapping of hands.'[1] It has existed throughout the world and is peculiar to no race or country. In India, it has been regarded as a *Silpa* and a sister art of music.[2] Dance was also inseparable from religion. It was regarded as a means to please gods and consequently dance performances were arranged inside the temples. This led to the growth of the institution of ***devadāsīs*** or temple dancing girls.[3] This was an institution socially approved of in ancient and medieval India and almost all the important temples had a number of dancing girls in their regular employ. The Kālañjar Pillar Inscription of the time of Madanavarman found in the Nīlakaṇṭha temple refers to ***Mahānāchanī*** Padmāvatī, the chief of the dancing girls attached to the temple. There is no reason to disbelieve that the temples of Khajuraho also had a host of dancing girls, dedicated to the service of the gods. And obviously, therefore, they have also found an important place amongst the numerous sculptures that decorate the walls of the Khajuraho temples.

Numerically the dancing scenes are only next to military scenes at Khajuraho and are depicted generally in the thin friezes running round the ***adhishṭhāna*** and the ***janghā*** on the outer side, and the friezes found inside the temples, and occasionally also in the triple bands. The art of dancing was cultivated by both men and women. In the dancing scenes the dancer usually occupies the central position in the panel and is accompanied by two, three, or even four skilled instrumentalists.[4] The musical instruments used to accompany a dancer are the ***ḍhol***,[5] ***mridanga***,[6] ***vīnā***,[7] flute,[8] a ***śahnāī***-like instrument,[9] a pair of cymbals,[10] small drum,[11] gong and conch-shell Among these instruments the last two are rare and appear to have been associated only with temple rituals The drums and cymbals are hardly ever missing in a dance scene. Although the dancing party consisted of several instrumentalists, in some scenes there is only one instrumentalist, to accompany the dancer He is either a drummer[12] or a flute-

[1] *Chamber's Encyclopaedia* (1955), Vol IV, p 361

[2] Cf. V S Agarwala, *India As Known to Pāṇini* (1953), p 167

[3] This institution appears to have begun during the time of Kālidāsa who mentions it with reference to the Mahākāla temple of Ujjaini (*Meghadūta*, I, 35) In the earlier literature, such as the *Jātakas*, Greek writings, and the *Arthaśāstra*, there is no evidence that the dancing girls were associated with temples (A S Altekar, *The Position of Women*, 1956, p 82) The *Purāṇas* have described the merits of dedicating dancing girls to the temples (Cf *Padma* (Srishṭikhaṇḍa), 52, 97, *Bhavishya*, I, 93, 67) This institution was obviously introduced to increase pomp and glory of the temples but it was not without opposition, which is attested to by a reference of Alberuni (Sachau, Vol II, p 157) In the period under review the institution was fully patronised and encouraged by the kings, but they were always fearing opposition from the public (Cf *E I*, Vol XI, p 28).

[4] Chitra, fz. door to cella, lower lintel, Ibid, fz ft lt out, Par, lt out, middle band, Viswa, *Adhis* fz rt out, Ibid, lt out, Stella Kramrisch, *Indian Sculptures in the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (1960), pl 37

[5] Chitra, fz cella door, lower band, Ibid., fz ft lt. out, Par., back lt out, middle band

[6] Viswa, *Adhis* fz lt. out; Par., back lt. out.

[7] Viswa, *Adhis* fz. lt. out, Ibid., ft. rt out.

[8] Par., back lt out; Viswa., *Adhis* fz rt out, Chitra., *Adhis* fz. ft. lt out

[9] Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft. rt out.

[10] Chitra., fz cella door, lower lintel, Ibid, ft. lt. out; Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft rt out, Ibid, rt out

[11] Viswa, *Adhis* fz rt out

[12] Chitra, *Adhis* fz. ft lt. out

player.[1] The association of the flute with dancing is a romantic combination, in which case the flute-player was generally a male while the dancer, a female. The flute-player produced the melodious notes of some classical tune or else he sang on his flute the love-poems of his favourite poets, while his partner expressed those moods (*bhāva*) through the language of gesture (*angikābhinaya*), i.e., the movement of limbs (*anga*), parts of the body (*pratyanga*) and features (*upānga*).[2] In such scenes the dancer does not appear to be a professional artist. Probably the scenes represent family couples, singing and dancing for their own enjoyment.

In other depictions of dancing parties, usually there is only one dancer in the middle accompanied by musicians, but there are also several scenes in which two or three dancers dance together. The dancers are either all males or all females in such cases and the movements of their limbs and body act simultaneously.[3] In some scenes, however, although there are two dancers, their actions are not simultaneous. In such scenes, generally one dancer is a male while the other is a female.[4] These scenes appear to depict moods of the different characters. In a particular scene in the Javārī temple, the male and female dancers are holding each other's hands while dancing.[5] When there were three dancers in a party, usually it consisted of a danseuse, two male dancers and the attending musicians. The lady remained in the middle, while the male dancers flanked her on either side [6]

There is an attempt in the sculptures at illustration of various intricate poses of the dance. The panels have catalogued and preserved the dance styles prevalent in Central India some 1000 years ago. A careful study of these sculptures, it is certain, will reveal that a large number of the representations depict poses which have their roots in the technical literature of the dance. It is a difficult task, though worth undertaking, to identify the poses and postures with those described in the same Here we will confine ourselves to the study of a few select sculptures only to get an idea of the technical advancement of the art of dancing in the period of the Chandellas

A danseuse in the Viśwanātha temple represents a rare posture of the dance (Pl. XV, Fig 1).[7] Standing on her left leg, she slightly leans backwards, with her face towards the sky. She touches the sole of her uplifted right leg with the extended palm of her right hand, while the left one has been turned over the

[1] Chitra, *Adhis.* fz ft lt. out.

[2] *Aṅga* denotes the head, hands, arm-pits, sides, feet and neck, by *pratyaṅga* the shoulders, shoulder-blades, arms, back, stomach, thighs, calves and sometimes wrists, knees and elbows are understood, and by *upānga*, the features understood are the eyes, eyelids, pupils, cheeks, nose, jaw and the accessories, such as the heel, ankles, fingers and toes and palms (A K Coomaraswamy, *The Mirror of Gesture*, 1917, pp 17-18) For details of the movement of different limbs of body, see Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Chapters VIII and IX) and *Vishnudharmottara Purāṇa* (G O S, No 137, pp 55ff)

[3] Viswa, *Adhis* fz lt. out; Ibid, *Prad* fz back in; Lak, *Prad* fz back in, Ibid, lt in

[4] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz lt out.

[5] Jav., *Man.* fz. rt in

[6] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz rt out. Cf The sculpture from Bhubaneśvara (Pl. Panigrahi, Fig 10), in which three male dancers are dancing together.

[7] Viswa., *Mahaman* lt. in.

shoulder with the elbow pointing upwards. This is a rare example of sculpture where the entire figure is marked by the vigorous movements of the dance, yet it is poised and balanced.[1] A sculpture in the Ādinātha temple also represents a danseuse more or less in the same pose (Pl. XV, Fig. 5).[2] She appears to be in a rapt mood engendered by the aesthetic enjoyment of her own art. But the comparison of the above two dance sculptures will reveal that while the former has greater elasticity, ease, and control over the movements of the limbs, the latter lacks spontaneity, and simply delineates a stereotyped dance pose, perhaps the danseuse depicted was not equally accomplished

Dancing with swift movements was also practised and performed. The best example of such a dance is found in the Dūlādeva temple which depicts a danseuse lost in her performance (Pl. XVI, Fig. 2). The swiftness of movement and stepping is evident from her flowing scarf, outspread arms, sharp curve of the loins, and the position of the legs. She is accompanied by two drum-players who are controlling the steps with regulated percussion (Photo 29).[3]

A beautiful dance sculpture from Khajuraho, now deposited in the Philadelphia Museum,[4] depicts a danseuse in a balanced posture. She stands flexed in all the joints, touching the ground with the toes of the right and left feet in the *Rechita* manner[5]. She balances the movement of her arms, the right on her thigh, the raised left bent at a similar angle The musical accompaniment is provided by a male drummer, the other male playing on the cymbals (Pl XV, Fig. 2).

In the Lakshmaṇa temple a sculpture depicts a dance, probably by a professional male dancer before a dance-teacher (Photo 30) [6] The dancer stands with legs sharply bent and the right foot resting on the toes, adjacent to the left foot. The waist is slightly moved to the right and the head inclined to the left. The left hand in *Bhramara*[7] pose is raised above, while the right one has been twisted in *Mudrakhya-hasta*[8] (Pl. XVI, Fig. 1) He is accompanied by a drummer and *vīnā*-players. Two more examples may be cited wherein the hand poses are more or less the same but the posture is different. In one sculpture (Pl. XVI, Fig. 5)[9], the male dancer stands on the right foot, touching the ground with the toes of the left. His right hand is raised to the level of the shoulders in *Tripatāka*[10]

[1] Radhakamal Mukerjee, *The Culture and Art of India*, p 441

[2] *H M.S.*, pl 37.

[3] Dula, entrance to *Mahaman* rt in

[4] Stella Kramrisch, op cit, pl 37.

[5] *Rechita* is one of the five movements of foot (*pādakarma*) described in the *Vishnudharmottara* In this, the foot moves on the forepart and the heel is raised (Priyabala Shah, *Vishnudharamottara Purāna*, Vol II, G O S No 137, pp 60-61)

[6] Lak, *Jagati* fz rt out

[7] In *Bhramara-hasta*, dancer has 'open hand with the pointer bent forward from the base, or at the first joint' (*Marg*, Vol XI, No 1, p 16), Cf Priyabala Shah, *Vishnudharamottara Purāna*, p 72)

[8] In this *Hasta*, the 'dancer's thumb and first finger are joined with the other fingers erect' (*Marg*, Vol XI, No 1, p 16).

[9] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 14.

[10] Ibid, Vol. XI, No 1, p. 16











Plate XVI
DANCE POSES

pose and the left is brought down in *Mudrakhya* pose. The other figure (Pl. XV, Fig. 4)[1] represents a danseuse standing on the left foot while the right foot is raised above the ground. The right hand is shown in *Tripatāka-mudrā*, the pose of the left cannot be determined as it is broken. In a dance scene in the Khajuraho Museum a new hand posture may be seen. The scene represents a male dancer accompanied by drum and cymbal players (Pl XVI, Fig 4) He is standing in *Atibhanga* posture on the right leg while the left toe touches the ground. The right hand is raised to the level of the shoulder in *Añjali*[2] pose and the left touches the left knee in *Mudrakhya* pose. In a scene in Viśwanātha temple[3] a danseuse presents an extremely difficult type of dance posture The extended right hand touches the head while the left has been brought before the belly. She is standing on the right leg while the left leg has been flung backwards and is raised The danseuse looks like a dancing peacock Different varieties of hand poses and postures may be seen depicted in the thin friezes inside the *pradakshinapatha* of the Lakshmaṇa and the Viśwanātha temples Some of the more important *Hastas* of the *Nātyaśāstra* of Bharata such as *Ardha-chandra*, *Pātaka*, *Sūchyasya*, *Haṁsasya*,[4] etc, can be recognised in various dancing figures It is difficult to describe each of them here

Some dance representations in Khajuraho temples are extremely vigorous and virile in nature, e g, a dancer dancing with two torches (*maśālas*) held in the hands[5] There are also examples of the sword-dance in which, while dancing the performer brandishes a sword,[6] a dagger[7] or a club[8] in his or her hand In a scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple a man is depicted dancing with a snake's hood held in one of his hands[9] In one example, the dancer is shown balancing a ball in his hand while dancing.[10]

DANCE COSTUMES

The costume of dancers in Khajuraho sculptures consists of profuse ornaments and jewellery, rich coiffures and a smart dress The female dancer wears a tight short *cholī* or *angiyā*, so that the contours of her breasts are visible, and the upper abdomen is left bare (Pl. III, Fig 1). Sometimes even the short *cholī* is dispensed

[1] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 15

[2] When dancer's hand is nearly open with the thumb, pointer and middle fingers standing forward and touching at the tips, it is *Añjali* pose This pose resembles the *Hamsasya-hasta*, with the difference that in the latter the hand is somewhat stiff (Ibid, Vol XI, No 1, p 16)

[3] Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft rt out

[4] For a definition of the *Hastas* of Bharata, see P S Naidu's paper on 'Hastas' published in *New Indian Antiquary*, 1938, pp 346ff See also *Marg*, Vol XI, No 1, p. 16 and the accompanying plate showing different hand gestures, and Enakshi Bhavnani *The Dance in India* (1965), for explanation and illustration of the hand postures

[5] *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 15, fig 18, Dula, back lt out, Ibid, back rt out.

[6] Dula, back rt out, Ibid, rt out

[7] Dula, rt out, Ibid, lt out

[8] Mahādeva, cella door, lower lintel

[9] Lak, *Prad* fz lt. in

[10] Chitra, *Adhis* fz lt. out.

36 *Lady with a Parrot and a Bunch of Fruits*



36

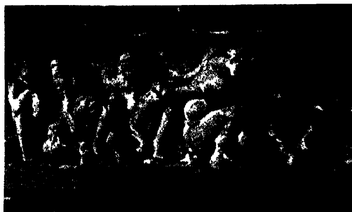


37

37 *A Nāyikā with a Monkey Clinging to Her Right Foot*



38 *Persons Engaged in Discussion, Viśvanātha Temple*



39

39 Bacchanalian Scene, Visvanatha Temple

40 Military Procession, Lakshmana Temple

41 Military Procession, Lakshmana Temple

40



41



42 *A Fighting Scene, Dūlādeva Temple*

43 *Elephant Knocking Down a Man, Kandarīyā Mahādeva Temple*

42



43

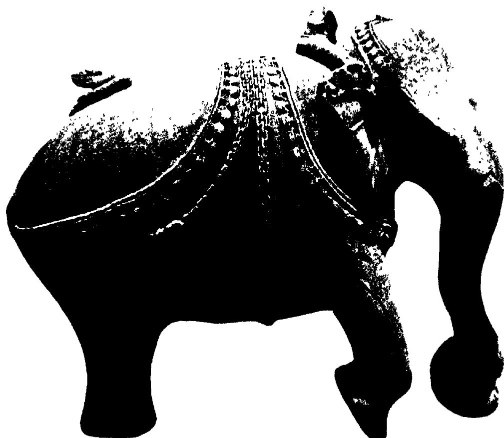




44

44 *Horse and Elephant Riders*

45 *Elephant, Viswanātha Temple*



45

with and there is only a *kucha-bandha*—a strip going round the breasts passing over the nipples and tied at the back [1] A carefully pleated *dupaṭṭā* is an important accessory of the costume of a danseuse Although it is not necessarily intended to cover any particular part of the body, it certainly gives a grace to her performance. To cover the lower part of the body she wears a *dhotī* in different styles Sometimes it has front pleats, sometimes hind pleats and occasionally it is without pleats. The ornaments worn by a danseuse are ear-rings, different types of necklaces, wristlets, bracelets, and waist-girdles.[2] The hair is neatly parted in the middle and worn in the *dhammilla* or chignon fashion. Quite often the hair bun is decorated with flowers and a string of pearls. Sometimes the danseuse also wears an attractive coronet or diadem on her head

The bell-anklet or *ghungru* is an essential item of a dancer's equipment. According to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata, 'the bells should be made of bronze or copper or silver ; they should be sweet-toned, well shaped, dainty with asterisms for their presiding deities, tied with an indigo string with a knot between each pair of bells At the time of dancing, there should be a hundred or two hundred for each foot or a hundred for the right foot and two hundred for the left. . . '[3] Khajuraho dancers used bell-anklets on both their feet There are several sculptures which depict a danseuse sitting on a high seat and fastening the anklet on her uplifted right foot A dwarf-attendant stands nearby with the other anklet, the one for the left foot (Photo 31) [4] The bell-anklets used by Khajuraho dancers consisted of only one row of small bells, about a dozen or a little more in number, for each foot.

The dancers did not use any footwear while dancing, unlike their European counterparts The bare feet are one of the essential features of Indian dancing which easily distinguish a genuine Indian dancer from others [5]

Male dancers were also decked with profuse ornaments and jewellery like the female ones They also arranged the hair in a stylistic manner that is not very different from the coiffure of the female dancers But it appears that they had a preference for round or elongated chignons. They do not appear to have worn any upper garment but for the lower part of the body they used a *dhotī*, both long and short, which had front or hind pleats.[6]

PAINTING

One will not find beautiful paintings on the walls of Khajuraho temples as at Ajanta or Ellora, but it appears that some sort of plastering was done on

[1] Dula , *Antarāla* rt in

[2] For details see Supra, pp 28-41

[3] Quoted by Kay Ambrose, *Classical Dances and Costumes of India*, p 12

[4] Par , lt out , Chitra , ft rt out , Dula , *Mahaman* rt in , Par , *Prad* rt in ; Lak , *Prad* rt in It is interesting to compare these sculptures with a similar figure in the temple of Janjgir, east of Bilaspur in M P (*H T* , Vol II pl XL) 'The dancing *apsarā* holds her anklet of tinkling bells (*nūpura*) which she is about to fasten on her foot , her small companion beats the drum while keeping step with her '

[5] Kay Ambrose, op cit , p 12

[6] For details see Supra, p 28.

the walls and they were painted too. Besides this, there are certain sculptures depicting a lady or a man painting with the help of a drawing board. A beautiful sculpture in the Viśwanātha temple (Photo 32),[1] shows a lady painting with a brush on a drawing board. She is obviously using water-colours. The delineation of the brush is quite clear and it should not be mistaken for a pen. A similar theme has been depicted in the famous sculpture known as 'Woman Writing Letter,' now deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.[2] The wooden board held in her hand has been often misunderstood for a letter. But the letter has been represented in Khajuraho sculptures as a long curved parchment, representations of which are found in abundance. The Indian Museum sculpture can be compared in theme with the Viśwanātha temple specimen, just referred to, and both these sculptures depict ladies engaged in painting and not in writing letters.[3]

The fact that line drawing was practised by the artists is proved by certain incision lines on the floor of the temples. On the floor in the cella of the Brahmā temple, two figures of kneeling devotees with folded hands have been incised on the stone. The outlines are sharp and the artist has tried to achieve a three-dimensional effect. Similar incision drawings on the stone are to be found on the steps of the Mātangeśvara and the *ardhamaṇḍapa*-balcony of the Lakshmaṇa temples.

Proficiency in painting can also be guessed from the numerous designs found on the garments The designs consist of flowers with petals of different kinds, criss-cross, diamonds, wavy lines and other patterns. From the carvings of different kinds of stencil patterns, floral and foliage designs, one may infer that these may have been practised on other mediums as well, such as paper. Beautiful designs were also painted, incised or embossed on the utensils of Khajuraho.[4]

[1] Viswa, lt out.

[2] C Sivaramamurti, *A Guide to the Archaeological Galleries of the Indian Museum* (1954), pl Va, Cf. Appendix I, 23

[3] See also Viswa, lt back out

[4] For details of textile designs and metal carvings see Infra

Chapter 7

GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

GAMES and amusements are an essential feature of every advanced society. Fed up with the monotonous routine of the day, everybody desires some moments of pleasure and pastime, when he can forget all worries and refresh the mind. The representations of games and amusements as found in the sculptures of Khajuraho include hunting, man-animal fights, animal combats, pet keeping, ball games, wrestling, music, dance, drinking and story-telling.

HUNTING

Hunting and the chase have been ancient means of recreation in India. In the beginning the pursuit of animals was necessary for subsistence when man was ignorant of the art of cultivation. Later, even when he acquired the knowledge of some better things for subsistence, such as food grains, hunting continued as before with somewhat changed notions about it. It became an outdoor game—a sport particularly of the men of wealth and leisure. During the period under review, hunting became a very important feature of the life of the ruling class as well as the aristocratic members of society, as testified to by contemporary bardic literature.[1] Proficiency in the chase was considered to be an achievement.

The depiction of hunting in sculptures provides a visual representation of this. Hunting scenes are found in the narrow friezes of the *jagatī* and the *adhishṭhāna*. One beautiful *shikar* scene is exhibited in the Khajuraho Museum.

Hunting parties appear to have started after great preparation along with a large paraphernalia which included several hunters, some mounted and some on foot. The hunting

[1] *Pṛithvīrāja Rāso*, 100-1.

scene in the Khajuraho Museum has been graphically described by Stella Kramrisch in these words: 'A scene of "antelope sticking" with two of the animals impaled, while an antelope, a bull, a ram (?), and two other animals are taken on leads towards the impaled victims. A small animal sniffs at one of the transfixed antelopes, next to it a scroll device fills the surface. The bearded hunter and the younger ones following him carry bows, dart and sword. A smallish and kneeling figure in front allows the long lead of one of the two smaller animals (dog ?) to pass between the legs of the caparisoned bull . . . . A horse follows the hunters' (Photo 33).[1]

In this scene, the hunters are shown going on foot and the tamed animals are held by them by means of ropes and bands. The purpose of taking trained animals was to attract the wild beasts.[2] Getting the smell of these animals the beasts came out of their dens or bushes and were instantaneously attacked by the hunters. The dogs, with their highly developed sense of smell, could easily detect the hide-outs of the wild beasts.[3]

Mounted hunters almost invariably used a spear in attacking the animal.[4] Whenever necessary they threw it at the fast running beast.[5] The hunters carried a sword also, but instead of hanging from the waist-band, it used to be fixed on the left of the seat on the horse,[6] and was used only in an emergency, when the animal attacked the hunter Often several hunters riding on horses surrounded the animals from all sides and gradually narrowing the circle, pierced them with spears.[7] In one of the scenes[8] a horse-rider is chasing a boar with great speed. His right hand is uplifted to throw the spear at the animal On the other side, another hunter is ready to charge with bow and arrow.[9] After the beast fell, it was trampled on by the horse.[10] This assured the death of the animal and gave courage to the hunting horses. The scenes of boar hunting are the largest in number at Khajuraho.[11] This might show that boar hunting was the most popular sport and also possibly that the region was rich in this game. Next comes the hunting of deer.[12] The birds were also hunted. Some of them were quite big and heavy, such as peacocks.[13]

[1] *J.I S O A* , Vol 1, p 103, pl XXII, fig 9
[2] The tribes of Madhya Pradesh still adopt the same tactics They tame the animals to attract wild animals of the same species (Cf *Bulletin of the Tribal Research Institute*, Chhindwara, M P , Vol II, No 3, p 20)
[3] Cf *Prithvirāja Rāso*, 103-3
[4] Lak , *Jagatī* fz back out
[5] Cf *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs 956, p 187
[6] Lak , *Jagatī* fz back out, several scenes
[7] Lak , same direction
[8] Lak , fz back out
[9] The tribal hunters of Madhya Pradesh make their bows of bamboo splints, with thin but strong string of 'Mohlan creeper ' The arrows are both wood and iron tipped Iron tips are often poisoned and are generally used for killing large animals The arrows with wood tips are shot at smaller creatures such as birds (*Bulletin, Chhindwara Institute*, p 26). Cf *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs 953, p 187
[10] Lak , *Jagatī* fz back out.
[11] Several scenes in Lak , *Jagatī* fz back and rt. out , Kand , *Prad* back in , Ibid , *Adhis* fz ft out.
[12] Lak , *Jagatī* fz back out , Ibid , *Adhis* fz back out.
[13] Kand , *Adhis* fz rt. out

After the hunt was over, the party returned with the kill with great rejoicing.[1] The hunted animal was slung by its feet from a pole and was carried home by two or four persons, depending on the weight of the beast.[2] Lighter game was tied to one end of the pole and was carried by only one person. A frieze in the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple depicts a hunter returning with his game, a peacock.[3] He has tied its beak to one end of the stick that he balances on his shoulder. *Prithvīrāja Rāso* corroborates these modes of transportation, but it mentions other means also, such as carts, camels, elephants, etc.[4] The sculptures, however, do not delineate these means probably due to want of space and the limited number of scenes depicting the return from the chase.

In one of the hunting scenes,[5] two men are depicted carrying a dead boar tied to the middle of a pole, while a man with a bow is shown leading. It appears that sometimes the hunters used to employ labourers to carry the game; since the persons carrying the animal do not bear any weapons, they cannot be hunters.

ANIMAL COMBATS

Animal combat as a source of amusement had been an old practice in India as well as many other countries It satisfied the crude and primitive instincts of man In medieval times animal combats became quite popular under the martial race of the Rajputs. There are several scenes of animal combats in Khajuraho sculptures. Two types of combinations are usually found in such scenes. Sometimes a fight between two elephants is depicted (Photo 34)[6] and sometimes the combat takes place between an elephant and a lion [7] In a frieze set in the *jagatī* at the back of the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple, a lively scene of elephant and lion fight has been depicted. The roaring lion is attacking with his paws on the trunk of the elephant. Due to the impact, the *Mahout* on the neck of the elephant is shown falling back. The two rivals have been depicted as possessing equal strength and none is ready to yield to the other.

Usually in such scenes, only the participating animals are depicted. In a few, however, some human figures also appear, but none of them can be recognized as a king or a person of an equally high status. The type of amusement, however, being very costly, could only have been meant for royalty and the aristocratic class. But probably the public was not barred and they too enjoyed it.

[1] According to the *Prithvīrāja Rāso* (125-56), *Śahnāī*-players and drum-beaters also accompanied the party, obviously to play on the instruments while returning Drums were beaten during the hunt also to drive the animals to some strategic position

[2] Kand, *Adhis* fz. ft. out, Ibid, *Prad* back in, *Marg* ,Vol X, No. 3, p 12, fig 12

[3] Kand, *Adhis*. fz rt out

[4] *Prithvīrāja Rāso*, 125-56

[5] Kand., *Adhis*. fz rt out.

[6] Lak, *Adhis*. fz. back out, Kand, fz. *Prad* rt in, Viswa., *Adhis* fz rt out

[7] Lak., fz. back out; Khajuraho Museum, No. 1041, *Marg*, Vol. X, No 3, p 12, fig 13, Viswa., fz lt. out.

MAN-ANIMAL FIGHTS

Man-animal fights as amusement are also of primitive origin. The evidences of its prevalence are found right from the Indus Valley age to the 17th century.[1] A few scenes at Khajuraho depict fights between man and elephant (Pl. XIX, Fig. 28). The man though far weaker in strength managed to resist the animal due to his smartness and intelligence. In some scenes, the man is shown engaged in a fight with an elephant who is fully decorated and has trappings. The man is seen charging with a spear.[2] Sometimes a man is depicted as holding the tusk of the elephant and charging with a dagger or sword.[3] The elephant has trappings and the usual decorations. In one scene a man fights without any weapons.[4] In the *Mānasollāsa*[5] a detailed description of this game is found. The amusement was called *gajavāhyālivinoda*. Before the commencement of this sport the elephant's head and trunk were besmeared with *sindūra* and his thighs were massaged with oil. On the day of the fight, he was not given anything to eat. Blindfolded with a cloth, he was taken to the arena amid the beating of drums. The cloth was removed in the arena. As soon as the elephant rushed towards the man, he was attacked by a horse-rider from behind. The enraged elephant turned back with great violence, and the audience was amused !

BALL GAMES

Among outdoor games the ball game (*kanduka-krīḍā*)[6] was very popular. This game appears to have been especially liked by the women, as in all the sculptural delineations of it the player is a woman.[7] This does not, however, mean that the ball game was confined to the ladies alone It must have been played by men also. Their absence should be attributed to the partiality of the artists who found greater aesthetic possibilities in the figure of a woman straining to throw the ball. It is in fact a very favourite theme of the Khajuraho sculptors. The ladies in such depictions (Photo 35)[8] are shown as standing cross-legged, slightly tilting back and trying to throw the ball with the right hand from over the head as in cricket bowling The left hand has been turned towards the right, partly to control the *dupaṭṭā* from slipping down, and partly to put greater force into the throw. On seeing these sculptures one cannot but think that the girls are throwing the ball towards another player, who, in her turn, will throw it to still another player The game appears to have been a simple throw and catch. It is also possible that the player on the other side might be using some kind of a bat to receive the ball.

[1] *Bhārati*, No 4 (Hindi Section), pp 1 ff
[2] Cf Dula , *Adhis* fz back out
[3] Lak , *Adhis*, fz rt. out
[4] Lak., fz. back out
[5] *Bhārati*, No 4, p. 5
[6] *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs 362, p 71
[7] Lak., *Mahaman* bracket fig , Ibid , back out ; Kand , *Prad* back in , Ibid , rt out , Vam , *Man* rt in , Chitra , rt. out , Devi , back and rt. out , Viswa., *Prad*. back in
[8] Lak , *Mahaman*. bracket fig., *H T*, Vol. II, pl XVIII.

KEEPING PETS

The sculptures of Khajuraho reveal that the people took pleasure in keeping pets, both birds and animals. The ladies liked to keep a parrot in their homes and passed their lonely hours by talking with the birds. Many sculptures depict a lady standing with a parrot perched on her left wrist and holding a bunch of fruits in her right hand (Photo 36)[1]. In some cases the fruit is absent and the ladies are shown standing only with the bird on their wrist.[2] Their expression shows that they are talking to the bird.[3] The cage is never seen, which only shows the degree of familiarity between the birds and their mistresses. Cages of course must have been used to protect them from offensive animals.

Among animals, the monkeys were tamed. Like birds, they too were allowed to be quite free and were never tied up with ropes or chains. They could freely roam about in the house. In a scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple, a monkey is depicted even in the private chamber of the husband and wife (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 4).[4] Here a couple has been shown in embrace with a monkey standing near by. He is holding an iron crook, held by the man on the other side. The lady has turned slightly to see the mischief of their pet. In case of the monkey pets also, it was the ladies who took more interest and treated the animals with care and affection. In a sculpture a lady is shown standing with a monkey climbing up her right leg (Photo 37).[5] The lady does not appear to mind this. In another, the monkey has climbed up her left thigh.[6] She is again unmoved, watching her pet's antics with amusement. Ultimately, as depicted in the Lakshmaṇa temple, the lady has taken the pet in her lap.[7]

MUSIC AND DANCING

Music and dancing also provided amusement. Not all music and dancing scenes in Khajuraho temples depict professional musicians and dancers. Some of them obviously depict amateurs who are playing on some instrument or practising the dance for the sake of amusement. Ladies, when left alone, used to play on the flute[8] or the *vinā*[9] to pass their weary hours. In a scene in the Pārśvanātha temple,[10] a couple is shown sitting, the man playing on a flute while the lady attentively listens to the sweet notes of the instrument. In another scene, in the Chitra-

[1] Viswa, back out, Kand, rt out, Ibid, back rt out; Devi, lt out, middle band
[2] Devi, *Mahaman* lt in, Viswa, rt out, Kand, *Prad* lt in
[3] According to a reference in *Kuṭṭanimatam* (Vs 356, p 70), the ladies used to talk to their pet parrot (*Śukaśāvaka*), in leisure hours Cf the beautiful Kushāṇa sculpture of a Yakshī talking to a parrot, from Mathura, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (*A S M.*, No 73, pl XVI, 50).
[4] Lak., lt out; *Lalita Kalā*, Vols I-II, pl 31, fig. 15.
[5] Sculpture fixed in the *Jagatī* of the modern temple to the rt of Viswa; Kand., back rt out.
[6] Viswa, lt. out, lower band
[7] Lak, back out
[8] Viswa, *Prad* rt in; Adi., back out; *A I.*, 15, pl XL B; *H.M.S.*, pl. 25.
[9] Par., back rt. out.
[10] Ibid.

gupta temple,[1] a man is similarly playing on a flute, while a lady is expressing the moods evoked by the music by movements of fingers and flexions of the hands. In some scenes, a lady dances alone without being accompanied by any instrumentalist.[2] She is obviously practising the dance at home. Besides, it is quite clear from a number of music and dance scenes that music concerts and dance performances by professional artists provided good recreation to the people who witnessed them A frieze in the Lakshmaṇa temple depicts a dance performance before a dance-teacher seated on a high cushion (Photo 30).[3]

DRAMA

The educated and cultured classes enjoyed performances of literary dramas. The allegorical Sanskrit play *Prabodhachandrodaya* was written during the Chandella regime and was actually staged before Kīrtivarman to celebrate his victory over the Chedi king Karṇa.[4] Chandella kings were great lovers of the dramatic art and enjoyed it along with their friends and associates [5] This presupposes that there were royal *rangaśālās* or stages. The spacious assembly halls (*mahāmandapa*) of the Kaṇḍariyā, Viśwanātha and Lakshmaṇa temples probably served the purpose of public *rangaśālās*, where music, dance, and drama were performed on festive occasions.

There are many sculptures in Khajuraho temples depicting the Nāyikās or Surasundarīs expressing their inner emotions and feelings in graceful poses with a rare dramatic flare. Their smile, their hand poses, the flexions in their body, their quivering lips and meaningful glances, all give tongue to the mute stones with utmost expressiveness. To give an example, a sculpture in the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple[6] depicts a Nāyikā, who, it appears, has just finished her bath She is not even fully dressed. In the meantime, she hears the footsteps of some stranger, and hence pauses with an expression of a little uneasiness on her face. Her left hand is automatically raised to cover the breasts, while the right clutches at the *sārī* to hide her nudity. The sculpture is one of the best specimens of its kind in dramatising the entire psychological background with remarkable brevity. There are many comic scenes in which the beard of a clown is being pulled by a woman.[7] Probably dance-dramas were also performed in which the participants used masks. In a thin frieze of the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple[8] a person in a dancing party is wearing the mask of some animal head. A somewhat similar scene is depicted in the Lakshmaṇa temple also.[9]

[1] Chitra., fz ft lt out
[2] Chitra, fz ft lt out
[3] Lak, *Jagati* fz rt out
[4] *P C*, p 6, see also *E I*, Vol I, pp 217ff, 325, *I A*, Vol XXXVII, p 143
[5] *P C*, pp 6-7
[6] *H M S*, pl 27
[7] Viswa, *Prad* back in, upper band, Dula, back lt out, *Marg*, Vol X, No 3, p 40, fig. 3
[8] Kand, fz lt out
[9] Lak., fz back out

PAINTING

Painting appears to have been another source of recreation for the ladies who are depicted in several scenes as engaged in the art with a brush on a paper spread on the drawing-board (Photo 32).[1]

WRESTLING AND EXERCISE

Wrestling is one of the most popular forms of Indian athletics. Indians witness a traditional wrestling match round an arena with the same interest and enthusiasm as a game of football or cricket. Regular practice of wrestling is both a pastime and an excellent means of improving the physique. In a scene from the Chitragupta temple two wrestlers (*Mallas*) are shown engaged in a fight.[2] There are scenes in the Viśwanātha temple also which depict the same theme.[3]

The exercise is associated with wrestling. In one of the sculptures in the Dūlādeva temple, a man appears to be practising weight-lifting.[4] Exercises make the body well proportioned and good looking (*Surūpānga*).[5] The Chandella king Harsha, it is recorded, possessed a sharp intellect due to his daily exercises.[6]

GOSSIPING OR STORY-TELLING

Men and women in olden days, as even today, indulged in story-telling or just gossiping as a pastime. The ladies particularly became so much absorbed in talk as even to forget to take their seat.[7] Men passed long hours in idle talk, sitting in pairs[8] or in groups.[9] Even the busy soldiers snatched a few moments in which to exchange pleasantries.[10] In certain scenes two persons are shown talking or discussing some problem across a folding table (Photo 38).[11]

DRINKING

Drinking was another diversion of a section of the people. There are numerous scenes in the thin friezes of the temples in which a pot-bellied man is depicted as drinking wine from a cup. He is usually shown sitting comfortably on a mat or a flat cushion. Near by is an attendant, standing with a pot full of wine to refill the cup as soon as it is empty (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 2)[12]. Sometimes the man is depicted as drinking alone, the attendant being absent.[13] Wine was taken in the company

[1] Viswa, lt out, Ibid., back lt. out.
[2] Chitra, lt out.
[3] Viswa, rt out, Ibid., *Ardhaman.* balcony and *Prad* in.
[4] Dula, back rt out
[5] *E I*, Vol. I, Vs 21.
[6] Ibid
[7] Lak., back out
[8] Devi, back out, belt above the top band, Viswa, fz. *Prad.* rt in
[9] Chitra, fz. rt. out
[10] Viswa., fz., *Prad* rt. in.
[11] Modern temple before Par, Viswa, *Prad* fz. rt in.
[12] Viswa., fz. lt. out; Ibid, fz. ft. rt. out; Chitra., fz. ft. lt out; Ibid., fz. back lt. out.
[13] Chitra., fz. lt. out.

of women also, who too, it appears, enjoyed the pleasures of the drink.[1] Drinking was sometimes associated with music and dance.[2]

Some people indulged in all kinds of objectionable acts after getting intoxicated. A frieze in Viśwanātha temple (Photo 39)[3] depicts, from left to right, an attendant who is standing with a pot of wine, two men with long beards, a lady, and lastly a man with a clean shave. All the persons, including the woman, are obviously in a state of inebriation. The man sitting on the left is taking still more wine from the attendant. The person on his left is holding the lady by the wrist, but is looking towards the cup of his companion, probably for more wine. The reluctant lady has turned to her left. The third man sitting at the extreme right has placed his hand on her knee. The woman, like the men, does not appear to show much scruples, and the general impression created by the scene is one of extreme licence.

It may be mentioned here that some of these drinking and licentious scenes may represent traditional or sectarian themes,[4] but all need not be so; some may be purely secular, and to that extent may be taken to give a more direct and clear picture of contemporary life. If the scene under reference is of a secular variety, probably the lady is a prostitute, the locale is her house where the men have come to drink and enjoy. The literature of the age stands testimony to the free use of liquor and also licentious behaviour at a certain place, on certain occasions, and by a certain section of the society.[5] As the sculptures of Khajuraho choose to depict various aspects of everyday life in a clear realistic fashion, it is only to be expected that this aspect of life should also find representation. Also it would appear that some persons belonging to higher *varnas* had no hesitation in taking liquor, as in a few scenes the persons taking drinks wear the sacred thread.[6] The degenerated Buddhist and Jaina monks, as *Prabodhachandrodaya* informs us, also enjoyed the wine (*chashaka*) and praised the liquor (*surā*).[7]

[1] Chitra, fz. lt. out; Viswa, fz. ft rt out; Cf. *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs 796, p 155

[2] Kand, fz *Prad.* back in; Viswa, fz lt. out; Ibid, fz rt out

[3] Viswa, fz lt out.

[4] Some of such representations may probably be affiliated with rites and practices of Tantric cults, predominant in this age and also in this region. They may also be connected, howsoever remotely, with the Bacchanalian scenes—a well-known motif of Indian art. In the Kushāṇa art of Mathura, the scene was orientated to represent Yakshas drinking wine. The usual pot-bellies of such figures at Khajuraho might be due to either of the two reasons and similarly in either explanation, the participants need not be regarded as normal members of the society. But still they might be taken to give a picture, howsoever feeble, of the contemporary life where such themes were prevalent or such practices permissible.

[5] Cf. *P.C.*, Act II, p. 43; *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vs 796, p 155

[6] Devi., fz. lt. out.

[7] *P.C.*, pp 122 ff.

Chapter 8

GLIMPSES OF MILITARY LIFE

THE TENTH and the eleventh centuries of the Christian era represent one of the most disturbed periods of Indian history. The country was parcelled out into different principalities, constantly fighting against one another. Military strength was not only the deciding factor for one's political supremacy; it was the sole means of survival. The Chandella kings, the builders of the Khajuraho monuments, were well aware of the importance of military equipment, which they themselves had greatly relied upon for establishing their kingdom. By this time, the Muslims also had made their headway into India and were constantly hovering on the borders of the Chandella territory. Of sheer necessity, the Chandella army was strong, gallant and well-equipped.[1]

Khajuraho sculptures could not remain unaffected by the conditions of the time, and military life claims the largest number of scenes. They present numerous illustrations of every aspect of the art of war. Such scenes are mostly found in the thin friezes running round the *jagatī*, the *adhishṭhāna*, the inner *pradakshināpatha* and those near the junction of walls and roof in the *ardhamanḍapa*, the *manḍapa*, and the *mahāmanḍapa*.

Indian tradition is almost unanimous on the point of fourfold division of the army, namely, Elephantry, Cavalry, Chariots and

[1] An idea of the extent of the Chandella army can be had from the military strength of king Vidyādhara against Sultān Mahmūd, in A D. 1022, as given by different Muslim chroniclers The figures are as follows (*D.H.N.I.*, Vol. II, p. 690, footnote 2).

Horsemen	Foot-soldiers	Elephants	Authority
36000	145000	390	Nizamuddin
5600	184000	746	Ibn-ul-Athir
36000	145000	640	Gardizi

In spite of some possible inaccuracies, the figures are undoubtedly very impressive

Infantry. The division seems to have been based on the particular kind of animals or vehicles used by a section of the army.[1] The sculptures also show that the army consisted of elephants (*kari, gaja*), horses (*turanga*) and foot-soldiers (*padāti*).[2] Chariots are, however, conspicuous by their absence in military scenes.

ELEPHANTRY

Besides being a strong organ of the army, elephants could serve the purpose of comfortable conveyance and as an efficient means of heavy transport in times of peace. In an age when powerful mechanical weapons and explosives were not known, the elephant must have held a very prominent place in the army, mainly due to his prodigious size and enormous strength He was regarded as a superior fighting unit in the military organization. In the *Jātakas* and epics, elephants are given an important rank in the army along with the chariots. But it was during the time of Alexander's invasion that they became the first requisite of the army. From then onwards, their importance went on increasing[3] in spite of a great handicap under which this corps worked, elephants, in the thick of the battle, often caused much damage to one's own army. The figures given by early Muslim historians[4] also show that elephants were very much in use in war during the 10th-12th centuries.

Khajuraho sculptures tell the same story. They contain numerous scenes in which elephants are shown as moving in procession. Sometimes they were kept separate from the other organs of the army but usually they are seen either with infantry (Photo 40),[5] or cavalry.[6] Sometimes they marched also in mixed processions composed of infantry and cavalry.[7]

The elephants at times led the military procession when the destination had to be approached through dense jungles and by rugged paths.[8] In one of the scenes,[9] two elephants are shown with riders. The one in the front is uprooting a tree with his trunk. He is probably clearing the way for the troops. The *Agnipurāna* also informs us that the elephants were taken in front of the march to clear the trees and shrubs in the way.[10] The elephants often marched between two horses with riders who were always there to rescue this precious animal in a time of crisis.[11]

[1] *J D.L.*, Vol XIV, p 31

[2] The Sanskrit terms within brackets occur in the contemporary drama *Prabodhachandrodaya*, pp 157-58, 171, Cf *Śukra*, IV, 866, for somewhat similar terms.

[3] According to the *Śārngadhara Paddhati* (p 249), 'an army without elephants is as despicable as a forest without a lion, a kingdom without a king, or as valour unaided by weapons'

[4] Elliot, II, p 25; *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, p 12, Briggs, I, p 64

[5] Lak, fz ft out; Ibid, back and rt out

[6] Viswa, fz lt out; Lak, fz rt. out.

[7] Chitra., fz lt out; Viswa, fz lt out, Lak, fz *Jagati* ft and back out

[8] Viswa, fz lt out; Lak, fz back out

[9] Kand, *Adhis* fz. back rt out.

[10] V R R Dikshitar, *War in Ancient India* (1944), pp 170ff

[11] Chitra, *Adhis* fz back out, Lak, *Jagati* fz lt out.

Literature confirms this inference that in the march the elephant was defended by horsemen.[1]

The sculptures usually depict two riders on the elephant, one on the neck and the other on the back.[2] In some cases there is only one rider on the neck.[3] Whenever there is a *houdah* on the back of an elephant there are invariably three riders, one sitting on the neck, the other in the *houdah*, and the third near the tail of the animal.[4] Sometimes even without the *houdah* there are three riders on one elephant.[5] The rider on the neck is obviously the elephant-driver carrying a goad in his right hand, but he also may have taken part in warfare.

According to the *Agnipurāna*, there could be six riders on the elephant—two with maces, two archers and two swordsmen,[6] which does not sound very practicable from the point of view of warfare. *Mānasollāsa* mentions only two riders.[7] In Sanchi sculptures[8] and Ajanta paintings[9] we find at the most three riders.

Besides providing a stable and comfortable mount for one or more warriors, the elephant himself took active part in destroying the enemy. He could easily twist his trunk round the leg (Photo 42) or loin of a fighting foe while the latter was engaged in combat with another soldier and render him completely helpless,[10] and later dash him down on the ground with great violence (Photo 43).[11] In one of the scenes in the Chitragupta temple,[12] an elephant is shown twisting a soldier with his trunk to knock him on the ground while the soldier is making a desperate attempt to kill the giant animal with a knife held in his right hand. The elephant rider is, however, seen falling downwards, being unable to withstand the jerking movements of the animal. Another scene[13] shows that an elephant has enwrapped a soldier with his trunk and is about to knock him down. There are signs of horror on the face of the helpless victim. The elephants used to trample and crush the enemies to death who fell on the ground on being injured by horse-mounted warriors. The elephant was a horror to cavalry also. Twisting the trunk round the hind legs of the horse (Photo 44)[14] while the rider was in combat with his enemy, he could make both horse and the rider fall to the ground, to be

[1] Cf *Agnipurāṇa* (Anandāśrama), Chap 242, pp. 24ff
[2] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. rt. out, Ibid., fz back rt. out; Lak, *Jagati* fz lt out
[3] Kand., *Adhis.* fz. lt out; Viswa, *Adhis* fz rt out
[4] Lak., *Jagati* fz. lt. ft. out
[5] Ibid., *Jagati* fz. lt. out.
[6] V. R. R. Dikshitar, op. cit, p 170
[7] *Mānasollāsa*, Vs 1182
[8] Great Stupa, south gate, lower architrave
[9] Lady Herringham, pl. XLII.
[10] Dula., *Adhis.* fz. lt. out; Ibid., rt. out.
[11] Kand., fz. lt. out; Dula, *Adhis.* fz. lt out
[12] Chitra, *Adhis.* fz. lt. out.
[13] Dula., *Adhis.* fz. rt. out
[14] Ibid., *Adhis.* fz lt. out; Kand, *Adhis.* fz. lt out

ultimately trampled on by the feet of numerous soldiers.[1]

Elephants symbolised power and dignity. To give them an imposing appearance as well as to recognise their valuable services in the army, they were lavishly decorated and ornamented. The back of the animal was covered with a thick cloth sufficiently large in size to cover the entire back.[2] The cloth was sometimes round and sometimes square. Generally it was printed or woven with designs of diagonal lines or criss-cross patterns. Sometimes, though rarely, it was plain also. The edge of the cloth, whether round or square, had small conical fringes, besides an alignment of beads or pearls. A twisted cord was firmly tied round the belly of the animal. The cord also went round the neck and under the tail to firmly fix the padding on the back. The cord was sewn with pearls or precious stones. Sometimes two bells were suspended by a rope on either side of the elephant. Certain examples show that instead of rope, iron chains were used to tie the cloth. The bells on the extreme ends of the ropes or chains produced a tinkling sound as the animal moved forward (Photo 45).[3] The head of the elephant was almost invariably encircled by a string of pearls with pendants. The elephants were also provided with a housing or ***houdah*** which was either plain or decorated. Bāṇa speaks of decorated housings which were tied onto the back of the elephants by means of girth-bands; he also mentions bells which were tied to the neck.[4] Early Muslim historians also have referred to the use of the ***houdah***,[5] which continues even up to the present times

The weapons in the hands of persons riding on the elephants cannot be distinctly recognized. A Chandella inscription refers to the use of a bow by the elephant-riders,[6] but we could not find any such scene in the sculptures.

CAVALRY

Mounted soldiers formed another important section of the army. Horses of excellent breed were imported during the time of Harsha from Vanāyu (Vajiristan), Āraṭṭa (Punjab), Kamboj (in Central Asia), Bhāradwāja (Northern Garhwal), Sindh, and Persia.[7] According to Sulaiman, Jurz (Pratīhāra king Bhoja) maintained an excellent cavalry among all the Indian princes.[8] Chandella kings also maintained

[1] These scenes show that the elephants were probably given training in warfare Here, we are reminded of a reference in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* (Bk II, Chap 32) where he speaks of an elephant's training in trampling down and killing (*vadhāvadha*) and fighting with his own counterparts (*hastiyuddha*) *Harshacharita* (Tr. Cowell and Thomas, p 190) refers to the training of elephants in the 7th century, while *Mānasollāsa* (Vss 307ff) gives a vivid description of their training as practised in the 11th-12th centuries.

[2] See representations on *Jagati* fz of Lak. temple

[3] Viswa., elephant in round near steps on south, Lak, *Jagati* fz ft lt out

[4] *Harshacharita* (Cowell and Thomas), pp 202-3.

[5] Elliot, I, p. 170; II, p 223

[6] Khajuraho Inscription of Yaśovarman (*E I.*, Vol II, p. 132) describes that the archers standing on the infuriated elephants showered arrows on the Chedi king.

[7] V. S. Agarwala, *Harshacharita—Eka Sānskritika Adhyayana*, p. 41

[8] Elliot, I., p. 4.

a good cavalry force,[1] and appointed an officer called *Hastyaśvanetā* to look after the combined forces of elephants and horses.[2] In medieval times, the cavalry had emerged as a very essential division in the armies of Asia and Europe because of the deterioration of foot-soldiers.[3] In the rocky regions of Bundelkhand, the cavalry must have proved a boon to the army.

The horses, fully caparisoned, have been depicted in the sculptures as going in procession, which consist sometimes of horses only,[4] and sometimes with the horses marching along with elephants.[5] In some friezes they are shown as moving side by side with elephants and infantry.[6] A few times they are seen with foot-soldiers only.[7] Being the swiftest conveyance, whenever any news of revolt or border incursion was heard, the cavalry rushed to the spot, followed by other organs of the army. One sculpture depicts a horse and the rider rushing at top speed.[8] The speed of the horse was rivalled only by the elephants. One scene[9] depicts a horse running at a very fast pace, being chased by an elephant. The elephant has come quite close to the horse and is about to catch the hind legs with the trunk. Apprehending the danger the horseman has slightly turned back to attack the elephant with his long spear held in the right hand, holding the reins in his left. The whole scene vibrates with realism. The horseman used to keep a whip to make the horse go fast.[10]

A few sculptures show a horseman attended by a man with umbrella (*chhatra*) and accompanied by other soldiers with swords and shields.[11] One scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple depicts a horseman attended by two soldiers with sword and shield on either side (Photo 46).[12] He may be the king, the commanding prince or the chief of the army leading the procession.

Only one horseman rode on a horse, but curiously enough, in one sculpture[13] two riders are seen on the same horse. If this is not a mere fancy of the artist, it might be the depiction of a horseman helping a co-fighter who has lost his horse or who has been wounded. The horse-riders generally held a long spear and sword and shield. While facing an elephant, they always used the spear. There is no example of any mounted archer in the Khajuraho sculptures. Indian horse-

[1] *D H N I.*, Vol. III, p. 690.

[2] *E I*, Vol. I, p. 20, Vs 30. Later, the army of the Moghuls was essentially an army of horsemen that brought tremendous success to them in India. (Cf. Irvine, *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*, p. 5).

[3] Cf Arthur Birnie, *The Art of War* (1942), p. 64.

[4] Lak, *Jagati* fz. ft. out; Chitra., *Adhis.* fz rt. out

[5] Chitra, *Adhis.* fz. back out; Ibid., ft. lt out; Viswa, *Adhis.* fz lt. out.

[6] Chitra., *Adhis.* fz ft. lt out; Ibid, lt out; Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. back lt out; Dula, *Adhis.* fz. rt out; Ibid, lt. out; Lak., *Jagati* fz. ft. out; Ibid, lt out.

[7] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. ft. rt. out; Lak, *Jagati* fz. rt. out.

[8] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. ft. rt. out.

[9] Dula., *Adhis.* fz. rt. out.

[10] Chitra, *Adhis* fz. rt. out.

[11] Dula, *Adhis.* fz. back out, Lak., *Jagati* fz. rt. out. Cf. the sculpture of a horse-rider in the round in Duvela Museum, No. 717; Khajuraho Museum, No. 1318B.

[12] Lak., *Jagati* fz. lt. out.

[13] Ibid., *Jagati* fz. back out.

men do not seem to have ever developed any marked efficiency in mounted archery,[1] and so was the case during the Chandella period, as testified to by the sculptures.

Different types of movements of horses are recognisable in the sculptures. They are variously shown as trotting,[2] walking,[3] jumping[4] and galloping.[5] Like elephants, they also appear to have been given military training including proficiency in different kinds of movements.[6] Some contemporary epigraphs prove the existence of such training. The Anamkonda Inscription (Saka 1084, A.D. 1162) records that Rudradeva's horses 'are of the most pleasing shape,—of low sounding neighings,—possessed of all the excellent characteristics that are made famous by the writings that treat of horses,—adapted in their make for speed and weight,—very long lived,—and trained in five kinds of paces (*pañchadhārāh*).'[7] The Bednagara *Praśasti* of the time of Kumārapāla (A.D. 1151) similarly refers to the horses of Bhūmadeva as 'supremely skilled in accomplishing the five kinds of trot called *dhārā*.'[8]

The horses of the cavalry and those used in hunting expeditions are always shown equipped with bits and saddles along with stirrups Generally there is a thick and large blanket or padding held round the body of the horse by means of a girth. To secure the saddle-cloth more tightly, a breast-band and a croupiere have been used. These bands are either attached to the corners of the saddle-cloth[9] or are made to go over it [10] They are often embroidered or set with jewels.[11] Sometimes these bands have an appendage near the chest and back thigh on both sides.[12] Khajuraho sculptures do not show any specimen of a raised and concave saddle of wood or leather although the padding near the seat is comparatively thicker In a piece of sculpture deposited in the Duvela Museum (Photo 47),[13] apparently of the same date as the Khajuraho sculptures, there are distinct delineations of raised and concave saddles, saddle-cloths, girths, breast-band and croupiere.

The stirrups are also clearly seen in the Khajuraho sculptures. They are bow shaped with a broad flat foot-rest, hung by means of leather straps proceed-

[1] P C Chakravarti, *The Art of War in Ancient India*, p 41 The lack of horse archery was a grave weakness in the Indian military system 'It was especially so because the Turks who invaded India in the 11th and 12th centuries were pastmasters in that art The Indian foot archers with their formal drill and slow traditional tactics, were no match for the swift-moving, light Turkish horse bowmen' (Ibid, pp 42-43)

[2] Lak, *Jagati* fz lt out, Ibid, back out, Dula, *Adhis* fz back out

[3] Dula, *Adhis* fz rt out, Ibid, back out, Viswa, *Adhis* fz lt out, Chitra, *Adhis* fz lt out

[4] Dula, *Adhis* fz lt out, Chitra, *Adhis* fz back out

[5] Lak, *Adhis* fz rt out, Dula, *Adhis* fz back out, Ibid, rt out

[6] The regular military training of a horse, according to Kauṭilya (*Arthaśāstra*, tr pp 148ff) consisted of several forms of riding (*aupavahya*), namely, circular movement (*valgana*), slow movement (*nichaigrata*), jumping (*langhana*), gallop (*dhoraṇa*), and response to signals (*naroshtra*) Each movement had again several varieties

[7] *I A*, Vol XI, p 20.

[8] *E I*, Vol I, p 302, Vs 9.

[9] Lak, *Jagati* fz ft lt out, Khajuraho Museum, No 1318 B.

[10] Lak, *Jagati* fz lt. out.

[11] Ibid, *Jagati* fz lt out.

[12] Ibid, *Jagati* fz back out.

[13] Duvela Museum, No. 220

46 *Horse-rider Defended by Two Bodyguards, Lakshmana Temple*

47 *Cavalry, Dhubela Museum, No 2[illegible]0*

46



47





[illegible] Jumna Tomb [illegible]
(Ph[illegible] O. P. Khanna)

[illegible] Dance, Khajuraho Museum



5 *A Fighting Scene, Viśvanātha Temple*





[illegible] *Stone Cutter Working on Stone and Labourer Carrying a Stone Block, Khajuraho Museum, No. [illegible]*
(Photo: O. P. Khare)

ing from underneath the saddle-cloth. Usually stirrups were long and hung upto the belly of the horse,[1] but sometimes they were short and the knee had to be bent at an acute angle.[2] The bridle consisted of leather straps round the throat, across the forehead, on the cheeks and round the nose.[3] The reins made of a long narrow strap or twisted rope were attached to a bit. Martingales of cloth are also seen in the Khajuraho specimens but not distinctly.[4] The Duvela Museum sculpture (Photo 47)[5] mentioned earlier clearly shows a cloth fastened at one end to the nose-band and at other end to the girth, partly to prevent rearing and partly to make the equipment more imposing. There is one more thing that deserves mention. In most of the cases, a sheath with a long or short sword is seen attached to the saddle on the left side of the horse.[6]

INFANTRY

In ancient and medieval times the infantry determined the strength of the army and formed the nucleus of the armed force. It was more so when the theatre of war lay not in the open plains but in forest and hilly regions.[7] In all the temples of Khajuraho in which the *jagatī* and *adishṭhāna* friezes are found, the foot-soldiers have been depicted in various aspects They are shown as marching in procession, in small groups of four to six May be, each group was under the control of an officer.[8] On the way to their destination they used to take rest to lessen their fatigue and prepare for the onward march.[9] Foot-soldiers were appointed as bodyguards for the personal security of their leader. Such soldiers, fully equipped with arms, marched along with the leader who was on horseback.[10] The infantry, besides marching quite separately, used to walk along with other sections of the army also as already observed.

The most popular weapon of the foot-soldiers was the sword accompanied by a shield.[11] The spear[12] appears to have been only next to the sword in importance Other weapons used by them were the club,[13] the bow

[1] Lak, *Jagatī* fz back out, Ibid, ft lt out, Duvela Museum, No 220

[2] Lak, *Jagatī* fz ft lt out

[3] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz lt. out

[4] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz lt out

[5] Duvela Museum, No 717

[6] Lak, *Jagatī* fz back out, Ibid, lt out, see also the broken horse in the round, lying inside the campus of the palace of the Maharaja of Chhatarpur at Khajuraho (The Maharaja informed the author that it was hidden in the earth and roots under a tree in his garden)

[7] Cf P C Chakravarti, op cit, pp 19-20 Writing about the military might of the ruler of Mankir, Al Mas'udi records that 'his troops and elephants are innumerable, but his troops are mostly infantry, because the seat of his government is among the mountains' (Elliot, I, p 21)

[8] According to the *Śukranītisāra* (II 139-40), for every five or six soldiers there was an officer called *Pattipāla*

[9] Viswa., *Prad* fz. rt in

[10] Dula, *Adhis* fz back out, Lak, *Jagatī* fz rt out.

[11] Chitra, *Adhis* fz. lt. out, Viswa, back rt out; Ibid, lt out, Dula, *Adhis* fz lt out, Lak, *Jagatī* fz ft lt out, Kand, *Adhis* fz rt out.

[12] Chitra, *Adhis* fz. lt. out, Ibid, rt out, Dula, *Adhis* fz lt out, Lak, *Jagatī* fz ft lt out, Kand, *Adhis* fz rt. out.

[13] Lak., *Jagatī* fz lt out, Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft rt. out..

(Photo 48),[1] the trident,[2] and the dagger (Photo 12).[3] Sometimes the soldier was equipped both with a sword and a club.[4]

THE CHARIOT

The chariot, as an important section of the fourfold division of the army, played a very important part in warfare from the earliest times to the end of the period of epics and even several centuries after. Though lingering here and there it appears to have been rejected as an arm in the post-Kushāṇa period, but its final disappearance probably took place in about 8th century A.D.[5] The war chariots are conspicuous by their absence in Khajuraho sculptures also, and thus confirm literary and epigraphic evidence. The fact that other sections of the army have been depicted so lavishly but the war chariots are totally unrepresented in the sculptures, proves that by the time of the construction of the Khajuraho temples the chariot had undoubtedly been rejected as a war vehicle.[6]

CAMELS

Camels were also employed for military purposes.[7] The sculptures depict them as moving in processions, along with infantry, elephants and horses.[8] But such depictions being rare show that the use of camels for military purposes was limited. The camels are suited for desert conditions and are not very useful in hilly regions. They appear to have been used mainly for transport.

The equipment of a camel (Photo 50) consisted of a wooden saddle placed on the humped back.[9] The saddle was secured at the place by leather straps going round the thighs, belly, chest and forward hump. A semi-circular leather appendage is often attached to the straps, near the upper part of the legs. Leather straps went round the muzzle also. Single or double twisted ropes are often seen around the neck. The camel was controlled by a rope passing through the nose.[10]

COMMISSARIAT

Every organized army needs a separate department to look after the supply of foodstuffs and to perform several other civil duties which have nothing to

[1] Lak., *Jagati* fz ft. lt out, Ibid, *Adhis* fz rt out, Kand, *Adhis* fz rt out

[2] Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft lt out.

[3] Khajuraho Museum, No 155, Kand, *Adhis* fz rt out, Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft. lt out, Chitra, *Adhis* fz lt out.

[4] Lak, fz rt. out

[5] P C Chakravarti, op cit, p 26

[6] Chariots were generally used as a 'shock weapon' They were driven straight at the army of the opponent, and knocked and ran down all who came in the way Thus they were best suited for smooth ground such as plains or deserts and not for the hilly regions like Bundelkhand (Cf Tom Wintringham, *Weapons and Tactics*, p 41)

[7] Cf *Śukra*, IV, 884-5, 888, 1008.

[8] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. back rt out, Lak, *Jagati* fz rt. out

[9] Cf. *Niti.*, VI, 50; *Śukra.*, IV. 1010.

[10] Lak., *Jagati* fz. rt out (Newly found fz cleared in 1962).

do with the battle-field. According to the *Nītiprakāśikā*,[1] the army was followed by civil officials, workers, diggers, carpenters, surveyors, engineers, men acquainted with the field of action, hunters acquainted with forests, good physicians, etc. Glimpses of this section of the army can be seen in the sculptures. There are several scenes which depict soldiers enjoying music and dance (Photo 51),[2] indicating that the army was accompanied by a host of musicians and dancers also. Besides, there were persons who played musical instruments in the field.[3] Several military processions show labourers with bags of net on their back.[4] They are obviously carrying foodstuffs for the supply of the soldiers.

ARMED WOMEN

A few interesting sculptures of Khajuraho depict ladies also carrying different weapons like the sword,[5] dagger,[6] and bow.[7] In one sculpture, a lady is weilding a sword;[8] she appears to be practising its strokes. In another, a lady is shown charging with a sword, its blade being hidden behind the back and the hilt visible over the shoulder.[9] But it is difficult to say if women used to serve in the army as warriors. Their dress and ornaments are also not different from those of other women. It is quite possible that they kept arms for their personal security.

WAR MUSIC

Music has been an important feature of the army in all the ages. In ancient India, 'music was played when the army marched; it heralded the beginning of the battle; it announced the fall of a chief or knight; it was employed for signalling orders across the field.'[10]

Excellent war music has power to create an atmosphere in which every soldier is prepared to risk his life, unconditionally and unhesitatingly. The sculptures of Khajuraho have many scenes which give an idea of the war music of this period. The musical instruments of war recognised in the sculptures are drums (*bherī*), trumpets and conch-shells (*śankha*).[11] The drum has two faces and on the body of the instrument there is a network of cords which keeps the skins fixed and tight on both sides. It was held in the left hand and played with the right one.[12] The trumpets

[1] *Nīti*, VI. 34ff Chandellas appointed a veterinary surgeon, called *Aśvavaidya* (*A S R*, Vol. XXI, p 51) He must have accompanied the army with a rich stock of medicines, operating tools and attendant staff.

[2] Khajuraho Museum (Number could not be traced); Lak., *Adhis.* fz back out.

[3] Dula., *Adhis.* fz lt. out; Ibid, rt out; Kand., *Adhis* fz. back lt out.

[4] Kand., *Adhis.* fz. rt. out.

[5] Lak., fz *Man.* balcony lt. in; Dula., back rt out, Ibid, lt. out; Devi., rt out.

[6] Dula, lt. out; Śāntinātha temple inside, east.

[7] Chitra., cella.

[8] Dula., back lt out.

[9] Ibid., back rt. out.

[10] P C. Chakravarti, op. cit., p. 122. *Śukranītisāra* (IV, 1098-9) warns that the signalling sound for forming into battle arrays should be known to none else besides one's own troops

[11] Cf. *Śukra.*, II. 199.

[12] Dula., *Adhis* fz. lt. out; Ibid., rt. out.

were generally horn-shaped (Pl. XIV, Fig. 3). They were held in the right hand, the left hand resting on the thigh. Sometimes the trumpets were straight or tapering like a clarinet.[1] The trumpet was blown, all alone, by a man who led the procession. Sometimes two persons blew the trumpets simultaneously.[2] At one place, a drum and a trumpet both are seen in one procession.[3] Similarly, a conch-shell player also led the military procession; but in all the scenes the conch-shell is blown singly.[4]

The aforesaid musical instruments of the battle-field were characterised by piercing, deafening noise intended to enthuse one's own fighters and create terror in the enemy ranks. But the music played for the entertainment of the soldiers when they were relaxing, was melodious, producing soft and subdued notes. One scene[5] depicts an army unit relaxing after victory. It is being entertained by a dancing party, consisting of a dancing lady, flute and *mañjīra* players. Two of the soldiers have also joined in the dance. In some scenes,[6] a military unit of soldiers is shown marching, accompanied by a dance and music party. They are probably returning after victory. A museum specimen also depicts the soldiers enjoying music and dance (Photo 51) [7]

FIGHTING

The Khajuraho temples have numerous sculptured scenes in which actual fighting has been shown. They present a visual picture of the mode of combat. It appears that the different organs of the army, namely, infantry, cavalry and elephantry, did not remain separate in the battle-field for long, but soon used to get mixed up as the battle reached full swing.

The political thinkers of all periods of ancient Indian history have prescribed several rules for a righteous battle. According to Śukra, a contemporary writer, the instruments and methods of war should be guided by certain ethical laws. As a general rule, every warrior was to fight only with his equal. A chariot-warrior should fight another chariot-warrior and similarly foot-soldiers, horse-warriors and elephant-warriors should fight their counterparts in the hostile army.[8] A warrior was to resist his enemy with similar weapons and the fallen and weaponless soldier was not to be killed.[9] The sculptures of Khajuraho show that these rules were not observed. Elephant-riders are shown freely fighting with horse-riders or foot-soldiers. Similarly, horse-riders could also challenge a foot-soldier, or an elephant-rider.[10] Not only this, sometimes when the foot-soldier was fighting

[1] Dula, *Adhis* fz back out, Lak, fz rt out
[2] Ibid, *Adhis* fz. rt out
[3] Ibid, *Adhis*. fz rt. out.
[4] Kand, *Prad*. fz rt in, Dula *Adhis* fz rt out
[5] Lak, *Adhis* fz back out
[6] Ibid, *Adhis* fz. ft rt out, Ibid, *Jagati* fz rt out.
[7] Khajuraho Museum (Number could not be traced)
[8] *Śukra*, IV. 1174-5
[9] Ibid, IV 1175, 1177.
[10] Lak., *Adhis*. fz. rt out, Ibid, back out, Dula, *Adhis*. fz. lt. out, Ibid, rt out

with a horse-rider, his leg was pulled by an elephant.[1] In one scene, a soldier has caught hold of the beard of another and is attacking him with a dagger (Photo 52).[2]

Generally an attack on the chest was aimed at (Photo 52)[3] as it proved fatal. Often the soldiers fought with two weapons. In a scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple, a soldier is seen holding a club in his right hand and a sword in his left.[4]

CAMP LIFE

A few scenes shed some light on the camp life of the soldiers. They used to sit together and gossip, but even then they were not without weapons.[5] Musicians and dancing girls, accompanying the army, entertained the soldiers in the camp. Although the function of the dancing girls was to dance and sing, the soldiers are seen cracking indecent jokes with them.[6] In one of such scenes in the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple, the soldiers are molesting a woman.[7] Drinking also appears to have been common amongst the soldiers. At one place two soldiers are standing with swords. Their actions and style of standing show that they are drunk.[8] Elsewhere also some persons are depicted as drinking from a cup in a military setting.[9] Soldiers were provided with drinks (*mada*) for increasing valour. Drinking was certainly not considered to be a vice.[10]

[1] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. lt. out, Kand, *Adhis* fz. lt. out.
[2] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz lt and rt out
[3] Ibid., *Adhis.* fz lt. and rt out
[4] Lak, fz. rt. out.
[5] Viswa, *Prad.* fz. in.
[6] It is interesting to note here Māgha's (*Śiśupālavadha*, V) description of encampment and reference to prostitutes: 'As soon as the army reached the encampment, the prostitutes pitched their tents, spread their beds, made themselves more attractive by putting on new robes and like old residents, with offerings of water and betel leaf, began to receive strangers.'
[7] Kand., *Adhis.* fz. back lt. out.
[8] Viswa., *Adhis.* fz. lt. out.
[9] Dula., *Adhis.* fz. rt. out; Ibid, lt out.
[10] Cf. पाययित्वा मदं सम्यक् सैनिकाञ्शौर्यवर्धनम् ॥ *Śukra.*, IV. 1173.

Chapter 9

WEAPONS OF WAR

MILITARY scenes in Khajuraho sculptures are equally important to students of Hindu military science who are interested in the history of ancient weapons.[1] They represent various types of arms which were actually current in warfare in those days. It will be seen that many weapons of more ancient days, such as the bow and arrow, the battle-axe and trident, etc., lost their importance as war weapons in course of time. The weapons like the thunder-bolt, *chakra* and noose, etc., are also absent in the military context, and are seen only as the traditional attributes of gods. In Khajuraho sculptures swords and spears are the most popular weapons. A rich variety of shields of different sizes has also been depicted. Among other ancient weapons, the club appears to have survived in the Khajuraho period, as a fairly good number of scenes depict clubs in the hands of the warriors. But their details are better recognised in those held by gods and demi-gods. The bow and arrow are very rare in the military scenes. We shall discuss here the different weapons as gathered from the Khajuraho sculptures.

SWORDS (*asi, khaḍga*)[2]

The most popular weapon at Khajuraho, as said above, was the sword. It was the best suited war instrument for close combat. To Vaiśampāyana, the *asi* or *khaḍga* was superior to all the other weapons described by him.[3] Swords

[1] For the references of these weapons in ancient literature, see V.R R. Dikshitar, op. cit., chap. III ; P.C. Chakravarti, op cit., pp 151ff, G T Date, *The Art of War in Ancient India*, pp. 10ff.

[2] *P.C*, p. 158; *E.J.*, Vol I, p. 126, Vs 17; *Nīti*, III; *Śukra*, IV. 1048

[3] आयुधेभ्यो वर: खड्ग: तस्माल्लोकेषु विश्रुत: ।
मया सृष्ट: पुरा राजन् कस्मिंश्चित्कारणान्तरे ॥

Nīti., III 8

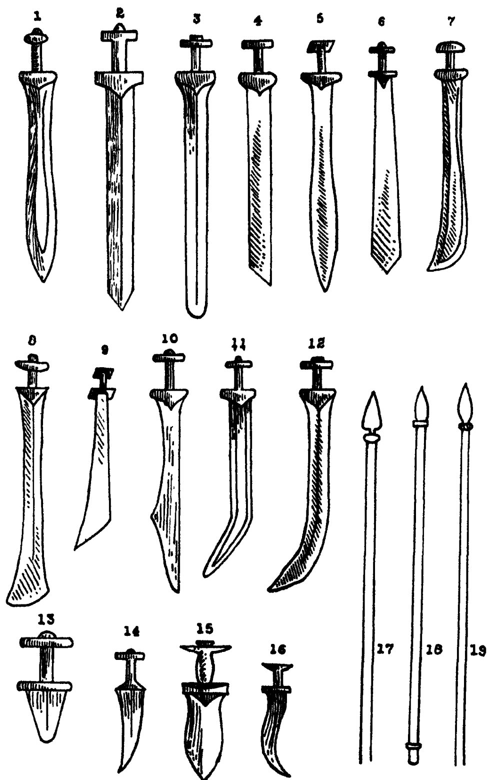


Plate XVII
SWORDS, DAGGERS AND SPEARS

were used by all units of the army. In the military processions sculptured most of the soldiers carry swords, holding the hilt with the down stretched right hand, keeping the weapon horizontal. Sometimes the sword is placed on the shoulders.

From a study of the various types of swords represented in the hands of soldiers, the following classification of the weapon is possible:

A DOUBLE-BLADED STRAIGHT SWORDS

A 1 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 1).[1] This was a double-edged straight sword with a sufficiently broad blade. About two inches from the bottom, the edges converge to make a blunt point. This type of sword seems to have been thick and heavy and must have been equally good for both cut and thrust. The handle consists of a pommel, grip and quillon and the tang-end is also visible. The guard, however, is not to be seen. A fuller runs throughout the length of the sword on both the sides which would give rigidity to the blade.

A 2 (Pl. XVII, Fig.2).[2] This is a variety of type *A* 1 and differs mainly in having a sharp triangular point at the lower end. Like type *A* 1 this also has a double-edged straight blade with quillon, pommel and grip. The blade is thick in the middle, this being indicated by the medial rib running from the langet upto near the lower end.

A 3 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 3). In another variety of the straight sword, the weapon has a semi-circular end instead of a pointed one, other details being similar to *A* 2.

A 4 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 4).[3] This differs from *A* 3 only in having a slanting point

B THRUST-SWORDS

B 1 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 5).[4] The swords of this type were primarily meant for thrusting and not for striking. Like double-edged swords, they also were straight, but the two edges were not quite parallel. The point seems extremely sharp and may be identified with the lotus petal variety of Varāhamihira.[5] This sword was also provided with a pommel and quillon, the former being square in shape while the latter was a straight bar. The langets project from the quillon and fixed the scabbard to the handle quite strongly. There is no guard for the grip.

B 2 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 6).[6] This is a straight sword the blade of which gradually widens and makes a triangular point. The langets gripping the blade are also triangular.

[1] Viswa, fz rt out, Ibid, back out, Lak, *Jagati* fz. back out, Ibid., *Mahaman*. bracket; Dula, *Adhis*. fz lt out.

[2] Lak, *Prad* in, lower band, Ibid, *Ardhaman* lt. in

[3] Ibid., ft rt Sub Shrine, east out.

[4] Devi., back out

[5] According to the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* (50-7), 'the most esteemed swords are those that are fashioned like a cow's tongue, a lotus petal, a bamboo leaf and an oleander leaf, rapiers and scimitars.'

[6] Viswa., *Adhis* fz back rt. out.

C SWORDS WITH AXE-END

C 1 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 7).[1] This sword has the usual hilt but the blade is heavy and takes a sharp round near the point of percussion, thus making an axe-point Both the edges have been sharpened. The fuller runs throughout the blade. The breadth of the blade near the percussion point is slightly greater than that near the hilt.

C 2 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 8).[2] This is a variety of type *C* 1, but it is lighter as compared to the former. Its point is also slightly different. The medial rib is distinctly shown. The most notable feature of this sword is its triangular quillon which serves the purpose of langet also.

D CUT-SWORDS

D 1 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 9).[3] Such swords appear to have been single-edged with a strong and heavy blade. Near the handle the blade is narrow, but gradually it broadens at the other end, where it has been cut to form an angle of about 120° with the sharpened edge. The lower end of the sword thus automatically becomes pointed. The pommel and quillon are both square in shape. Two things are, however, notable in this type; firstly, the square quillon which served the purpose of guard for the grip, and secondly the absence of langets. The latter shows that such swords were not kept in their scabbards but were probably held unsheathed in the hand

D 2 (Pl. XVII, Fig. 10).[4] This is a peculiar type of sword with one edge straight, while the other has two curves forming a pointed projection in the middle. The point is blunt and the handle is as usual.

E PLOUGH-SHAPED SWORDS

The blade of such swords (Pl. XVII, Fig. 11)[5] is straight upto the point of precussion from where it makes a turn at a wide angle. Both the edges are sharpened. The point is practically blunt. The handle is as usual. The fuller is quite prominent, indicating this sword to be of the heavy type.

F CURVED SWORDS

This sword (Pl. XVII, Fig. 12)[6] has a broad curved blade and a pointed end. Both the edges are sharp. The grip has no peculiarity. The breadth of the blade is uniform except near the point where it narrows down. It has a medial rib.

The swords were kept in sheaths which is evident from langets projecting from the quillons. In the sculptures the soldiers are shown wearing a belt from

[1] Lak, fz rt out, Viswa., ft. lt out
[2] Lak., *Jagati* fz back out
[3] Viswa., *Adhis.* fz. rt out
[4] Ibid, back rt. Sub Shrine, west out, lower band
[5] Lak, *Jagati* fz. rt. out; Ibid., fz. back out; Viswa., *Adhis.* fz. lt. out, Ibid., back rt. out.
[6] Lak, *Ardhaman.* balcony, lt in

which the sheath hangs on the right side.[1] Often the sheaths were decorated with floral designs.[2] In ancient times the sheaths were usually made of leather but occasionally of wood also.[3] Some types of the swords of Khajuraho were not meant to be kept in sheaths, as is clear from their appearance.

Khajuraho-swords were used both for cut and thrust purposes. Cut-swords were heavy for causing crushing blows and less importance was attached to their points, while thrust ones were light with sharp points. The swords were used mostly by foot-soldiers for close combat. In the military processions depicted, the sword is pictured with them almost invariably along with a shield. It appears that during that period the effectiveness of the sword as a powerful weapon was rightly realised and it superseded all other weapons for combat purposes. This is reflected in contemporary military literature also. In the *Yuktikalpataru* the minutest details for the making and use of the sword are given, though other weapons are summarily dealt with.[4]

THE DAGGER (*maushṭika*)[5]

The daggers or short swords are much smaller in size than the sword. They were kept in a sheath suspended from the waist-belt.[6] The dagger was a useful weapon in times of crisis. A sculpture in the Chitragupta temple[7] depicts an elephant who has enwrapped a man with his trunk. The man in this helpless state attacks the elephant with his dagger and makes a last effort to get rid of the giant animal. Apart from their military use, daggers were kept by civilians also.[8] The dagger was kept by the hunters too, who greatly relied on it against unanticipated danger.[9] It could be used in all sorts of ways being a small and very handy weapon.[10]

Following are the types of daggers seen in Khajuraho sculptures .

Type A (Pl. XVII, Fig. 13).[11] This is a small dagger with a stout handle, consisting of pommel, quillon and tang-end. The pommel and quillon appear to have been made of flat bars. The blade which accounts for half of the weapon is of the shape of a cow's tongue. In some specimens the blade is longer and pointed.[12]

Type B (Pl. XVII, Fig. 14).[13] This is a light knife with a handle about half the length of the blade. One edge of the blade is straight while the other is curved.

[1] Viswa., *Adhis.* fz. rt. out.
[2] Lak., *Mahaman.* bracket.
[3] P C. Chakravarti, op. cit., p 165
[4] Cf. G T Date, op. cit., p. 15.
[5] *Niti* , II 20 ; Ibid., V. 40.
[6] Khajuraho Museum, Nos 155, 855, 860 and 862.
[7] Chitra., *Adhis.* fz. lt. out
[8] Khajuraho Museum, No. 1337 ; Viswa., *Adhis.* fz. ft. lt out.
[9] Khajuraho Museum, No. 155.
[10] Cf *Niti.*, II. 20 ; Ibid , V. 40-44.
[11] Viswa., back rt. Sub. Shrine, west out, lower band ; Chatur., lt out, upper band
[12] Viswa , *Adhis.* fz ft lt out

Type C (Pl. XVII, Fig. 15).[1] This is a heavy dagger with a well wrought handle and a blade sufficiently broad in the middle. The latter is of the shape of a lotus petal.

Type D (Pl. XVII, Fig. 16).[2] This is a beautiful dagger with a curved and pointed blade like a sickle.

THE SPEAR (*Kunta*)[3]

Spears consisted of wooden or bamboo poles pointed with blades of steel, iron or copper and balanced with an iron knob or spike at the lower end.[4] Some types of spears were made entirely of metal, ending in sharp blades.[5] There are representations of various types of spears in Khajuraho sculptures depicting military scenes. The lighter ones may have been used as javelins, although there is no sculpture here showing the weapon actually being hurled at the enemy.

The spear was a very convenient weapon for mounted soldiers, particularly when they had to face an elephant-rider.[6] The charge of spears terrified the elephants because by reason of its long handle it could be used from some distance also and the charger remained unapproachable to the elephant's trunk.[7] Spears were used by foot infantry also.[8]

The following types of spears and javelins can be recognized:

1. Spear ending in a dagger-shaped blade (Pl. XVII, Fig. 17).[9] The joint of blade and shaft is made firm by a metal ring.

2. Spear with a leaf-shaped blade (Pl. XVII, Fig. 18).[10] Besides a ring at the junction of blade and shaft, another ring is found on the other end of the shaft, so that the weapon may not slip from the grip while in use. Sometimes the rings were beaded (Pl. XVII, Fig. 19).[11]

3. Spear with broad blade, of the shape of a lotus petal (Pl. XVIII, Fig. 1),[12] medial rib, ring at the junction of the blade and the shaft.

4. Spear with shaft as in No. 2 (Pl. XVIII, Fig. 2),[13] with a diamond-shaped blade having a pointed end with two points on either side.

5. Spear with the point resembling a barbed arrow-head (Pl. XVIII, Fig.3).[14] It was probably made entirely of metal and thrown like a javelin.

[1] Khajuraho Museum, Nos 155 and 855.
[2] Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft rt out.
[3] *Nīti*, V. 22; *Śukra.*, IV. 1048.
[4] R L Mitra, *Antiquities of Orissa,—Indian Studies, etc*, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 355; Cf. *Nīti*, IV. 38 and V. 25.
[5] Cf *Śiśupālavadha*, XIX 59.
[6] Dula, *Adhis.* fz rt. out; Ibid. lt. out.
[7] Ibid, *Adhis* fz back. lt. out.
[8] Lak, *Jagatī* fz. ft. lt. out; Dula., *Adhis.* fz. back out; Chitra, fz. lt. out.
[9] Chitra., fz. lt. out.
[10] Lak., *Jagatī* fz ft. lt. out, Ibid., fz. *Man.* balcony, lt. in.
[11] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz. lt. out.
[12] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz. back out
[13] Ibid., *Jagatī* fz. rt out.
[14] Ibid., *Jagatī* fz lt out

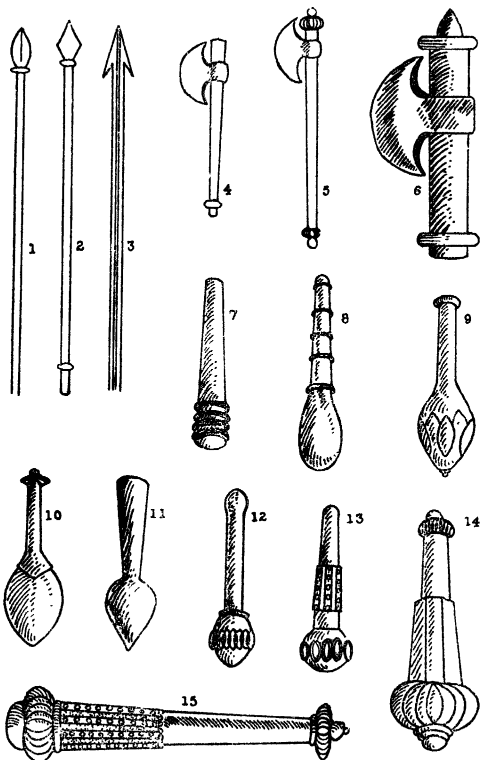


Plate XVIII
SPEARS, BATTLE-AXES AND CLUBS

THE CLUB (*Gadā*)[1]

The club or mace is one of the most ancient weapons of India. Beginning from thick sticks and longitudal stones, it was gradually designed in proportionate and attractive forms. It is a very popular weapon in the *Mahābhārata* and appears to have been more important than the sword in this epic.[2] The club has also been referred to in many later works and inscriptions. According to Vaiśampāyana, the *gadā* was made of iron with a hundred spikes at its broad head, and was four cubits long.[3] Śukra describes it as octagonal, breast high and provided with a strong handle.[4]

Khajuraho sculptures provide a fairly good number of scenes in which the warriors are depicted carrying clubs. Generally the club appears to be a weapon of foot-soldiers,[5] but occasionally, mounted soldiers were also equipped with this weapon.[6] Sometimes the expert soldiers fought with club and sword simultaneously.[7]

The following types of club can be recognized in the sculptures. The classification has been made according to the shape of its head ·

Type 1 (Pl XVIII, Fig. 7).[8] A thick tapering rod, being broader at the base than towards the hilt. The head is strengthened by four metal rings to make the weapon heavy and its blow fatal

Type 2 (Pl. XVIII, Fig. 8) [9] Also a thick rod with a knobbed head. The handle is uniformly thick throughout and is tied by five metal bands.

Type 3 (Pl. XVIII, Figs. 9,[10] 10,[11] 11[12]). This type has a pear-shaped head with either a cylindrical or a tapering handle. The head is sometimes decorated and an iron knob is seen at its top The handle is either thickened or provided with a ring or horizontal plate at the end of the hilt to prevent it from slipping from the hand

Type 4 (Pl. XVIII, Figs. 12,[13] 13[14]). This is a beautiful club with either cylindrical or tapering handle and a roundish head fitted with iron rings The handle sometimes appears to have been metal-plated with decorations.

Type 5 (Pl. XVIII, Figs. 14,[15] 15[16]). This type appears in the hand of God

[1] *Nīti*, V 29, *Śukra*, IV. 1046
[2] *J A O S*, Vol XIII, p 281.
[3] *Nīti.*, V 29.
[4] *Śukra*, IV 1046
[5] Viswa, *Adhis*. fz. ft. rt. out, Lak, *Jagati* fz. lt out, Chatur, rt out; Kand, *Adhis* fz back lt out
[6] Kand, *Adhis* fz rt out.
[7] Lak, fz rt out
[8] Ibid, *Jagati* fz lt. out
[9] Ibid, fz back out
[10] Kand, lt out
[11] Lak., fz. rt out
[12] Ibid, fz. rt. out
[13] Ibid., fz. *Man.* balcony, lt. in
[14] Ibid, *Mahaman* bracket.
[15] Viswa, *Prad* lt in, lower band.
[16] Khajuraho Museum, No 117

Vishṇu. It has a long tapering handle mounted with a big fluted knob. Half of the handle is either octagonal or gold-plated with decorations.

THE BATTLE-AXE (*Paraśu*)

The battle-axe, though mentioned in contemporary military literature,[1] is not very popular as a weapon of the field in the sculptures of Khajuraho. Generally, the sculptures depict it as a long tapering post, attached to a crescent-shaped blade towards the upper end (Pl. XVIII, Figs. 4 and 5). There is a metallic ring near the other end to prevent it from slipping. The other variety of the weapon is a thick rod, tied with two metal bands at the ends (Pl. XVIII, Fig. 6).[2] The blade, of course, is as usual in shape, but much heavier.

THE BOW

The sculptures depict the bow also as a weapon of war.[3] Its length was slightly less than the height of a human figure[4] While carrying it the bow was kept slung around the left shoulder.[5] When the arrow was to be discharged, its lower end was firmly fixed on the ground and the soldier using it sat on his knees.[6] In all the scenes depicting the bow, the weapon appears only in the hands of foot-soldiers. The representations, however, are limited in number which make it clear that this famous weapon of the epics had lost its former glory and popularity in the Chandella period.[7]

THE SHIELD (*Charma*)[8]

Numerous representations of shields are found in the sculptures of Khajuraho. It appears in the hands of foot-soldiers almost invariably. The shape of the shields vary. The largest number of representations is that of circular ones (Pl. XIX, Figs. 1-11).[9] Judging from the extent of the body they cover, their diameter appears to be about one and a half foot. They were provided with a stout handle at the back (Pl. XIX, Figs. 11-17). The other common variety is rectangular (Pl. XIX, Figs. 12[10] and 13[11]), with round or square handles. Sometimes they were curved either in the middle (Pl. XIX, Fig. 14)[12] or towards the lower end (Pl. XIX,

[1] Cf Śukra's (*Śukra*, IV 104f) description of a club as octagonal in shape (*ashtasra*)
[2] *H M S*, pl 32
[3] Kand, fz rt out; Śitalanātha temple, *Man*, Lak, *Jagati* fz rt out, Cf *Nīti*, II 17, and IV 6-9
[4] Lak, *Jagati* fz rt lt out
[5] Kand, *Adhis* fz. rt out
[6] Lak, fz rt. out
[7] Cf *J A O S*, Vol XIII, pp 269ff
[8] *Yuktikalpataru*, Vs 62 According to the *Mānasollāsa* (Vss 564-65) the shields were made of such materials as cane, wood or hide.
[9] Figs 1, 3, 4 and 8, Lak, *Jagati* fz lt out; Fig 2, Lak, *Jagati* fz. back out, Fig. 5, Viswa., fz. rt. out; Fig. 6, Viswa, fz ft rt out, Fig 7, Viswa, fz ft lt out, Figs 9 and 10, Lak, fz rt. out; Fig 11, Dula., fz. rt. out
[10] Dula, *Adhis* fz back rt out; Lak., *Jagati* fz. lt. out.
[11] Dula., *Adhis*. fz back out.
[12] Lak., *Jagati* fz ft lt. out

Fig. 15).[1] Another variety of the same type (Pl. XIX, Fig. 16)[2] has three curves. It covers more than half of the human body. An uncommon variety of shield is oval in shape (Pl. XIX, Fig. 17).[3]

The most interesting feature of Khajuraho-shields is their decoration, which is mostly confined to the circular variety. Decorations are made by carving or embossing flower petals, circles, concentric circles, criss-cross and simple lines (Pl. XIX, Figs. 1-11).

The technical literature on military organization and arms, contemporary or near contemporary to Khajuraho sculptures, is quite rich. But these are theoretical works and do not necessarily describe that which was in actual use. The sculptures, however, depict what was actually seen by the sculptor. The sculptural testimony, therefore, has greater value.

In respect of weapons literary works can hardly give such a clear idea about the form and shape of a particular weapon as the visible examples in the sculptures do.

[1] Dula, fz back rt. out
[2] Ibid, fz. lt. out.
[3] Viswa., fz ft. rt. out

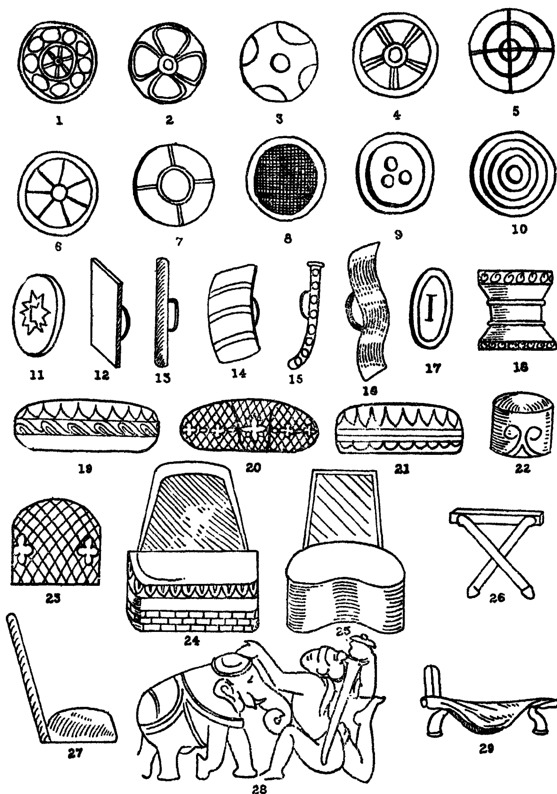


Plate XIX
SHIELDS AND FURNITURE

54 *Labourers Carrying a Stone Block, Chitragupta Temple*

55 *Pillar, Ghantai Temple*



55

54





56

56 *Sabha scene Lakshmana Temple*

57 58



57 Lady Writing a Letter, Visvanatha Temple

58 Lady after Reading a Letter



59 *Seated Buddha Image, Khajuraho Museum*



60 *Sibagna Puja Panel*

60

Chapter 10

INDUSTRIAL ARTS AND PROFESSIONS

A LARGE number of scenes depicted in the Khajuraho temples shed a flood of light on the various professions and occupations of the people.[1] Some of the sculptures throw direct light on this aspect, while others furnish indirect information. For example, there is no scene of a goldsmith making any jewellery or a blacksmith shaping weapons, but the profusion of jewellery found in the figure sculptures and the variety of weapons found in the military scenes make it abundantly clear that goldsmithing and blacksmithing were popular professions.

THE TRADES

METAL-WORKERS

Khajuraho sculptures provide overwhelming evidence of the high degree of perfection achieved by the metal-workers. They were of two types those who worked on the harder metals, such as, iron, copper, bronze and tin, etc, and those who handled softer metals like gold and silver The hard metal-worker or the blacksmith was an indispensable member of the society His assistance was sought in every day-to day need He manufactured a large variety of objects like ploughshares,[2]

[1] In the remote past of our cultural advancement, there was no connection between the occupation and caste One could adopt any occupation of his choice, irrespective of his birth in a particular community Later, the principal Varnas became rigid about their occupations In the beginning of the 7th century A.D., the Vaiśyas abandoned agriculture due to the influence of Jainism and Buddhism They also left industries, thinking them to be base work and hence these were taken up by the Śūdra (G. H. Ojha, *Madhyakālīna Bhāratīya Saṃskṛti*, pp 30-37) The *Śūdras* were divided into numerous sub divisions on the basis of the industrial work they adopted as their profession Most of the industrial arts in the period under review and also in the subsequent periods appear to have been popular amongst the members of the fourth *Varna* i.e. the *Śūdras*

[2] I O C, Fig 55

hoes and sickles,[1] chains and bells (Photo 45),[2] chisels and hammers,[3] instruments for carpenters and barbers, tools for working on wood and bamboo or those for cutting or tanning raw leather, and even the smallest objects like needles for stitching garments. He also manufactured different kinds of war weapons and accessories of horse and elephant trappings.[4] For the manufacture of arms, the best kind of steel was used. The Muslim historian Utbi records that the soldiers of Brahmanpāla, the son of Ānandapāla, used white swords, blue spears and yellow coats of mail.[5] These are the shades of quality metal. The time of Brahmanpāla is not very far removed from the period of the Khajuraho temples.

The metal-workers were well versed in carving designs on the metal objects. The shields bear different kinds of patterns consisting of floral,[6] criss-cross,[7] circular and semi-circular[8] designs (Pl. XIX, Figs. 1-10). Besides these, concentric circles and horizontal and vertical lines have been largely employed to decorate them.[9] Convex-faced mirrors[10] were also made of an extremely shining metal so as to reflect the face without any distortion. The skill of the metal-workers is again exemplified by various types of utensils, held by the gods, goddesses and the Surasundarīs in the sculptures. These appear to have been moulded and later finished by smoothening the outer surface. There are many depictions in the sculptures to show that these utensils were decorated with carvings of horizontal bands,[11] flower-petals,[12] and vertical,[13] straight[14] and wavy lines.[15] The carvings were sharp and precise.

The prosperity of the metal industry during medieval times is corroborated by contemporary or near contemporary technical literature dealing with metallurgy. Two such outstanding works are Bhoja's *Yuktikalpataru*, written in the 10th century, and Vāgbhaṭṭa's *Rasaratnasamuchchaya*, believed to have been compiled in the 13th century A.D.[16] The blacksmiths in medieval times were so expert in working iron 'that fine powdered iron could pass through linen.'[17]

[1] Khajuraho Museum, No. 868
[2] Viswa, elephant in the round, Ghaṇṭāī Temple, pillars
[3] Khajuraho Museum, No 1315
[4] See chapters on 'Glimpses of Military Life' and 'Weapons of War,' for details
[5] Elliot and Dowson, II, p 227 'White swords evidently mean that the best steel was used in the manufacture of sword, which when swung, appeared to be only a flash of light, a radiant whiteness' (*I C.*, Vol XIV, No 1, p 35)
[6] Lak, *Jagatī* fz back out
[7] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz lt out
[8] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz, lt out
[9] Ibid, *Jagatī* fz ft lt out, Ibid, lt out, Viswa, *Adhis* fz ft rt out, Ibid, ft lt out
[10] Kand, lt. out, Viswa, lt and rt out, Vam, lt. out.
[11] Devi, lt out, lower band
[12] Ibid, cella door, upper lintel; Ibid, back out, lower band, Ibid, rt out, lower band
[13] Ibid, lt out, lower band.
[14] Ibid, lt out, lower band; Ibid, back out, lower band
[15] Ibid., inside cella.
[16] *I C*, Vol. XIV, No 1, p 32
[17] Ibid., p 34

Khajuraho sculptures show the exuberant splendour of the art of ornament and jewellery making, indicating the flourishing state of this industry. A careful observation of the delineation of ornaments shows that there were different methods of making them. Sometimes the plain surface of the ornament was embossed with various designs including those resembling beads. Sometimes the decorations were made with a number of thin gold wires twisted into one. The ability to prepare thin wire testifies to the advanced technical skill of the goldsmiths. The ornaments were set with precious stones that were cut and shaped according to need. Persons of moderate means may not have gone in for gold ornaments or precious jewels, but they may have used silver, copper or still cheaper metals for this purpose. Thus the silversmiths and coppersmiths had also developed their professional art. Heavy ornaments for the hand, the leg and the waist were probably prepared by these artists. They also manufactured ornaments for horses, elephants and bulls. Coppersmiths prepared copper-plates for recording royal inscriptions and private donations. The scribe of each copper-plate must have been an expert calligraphist. On the top of the copper-plate a line sketch of the goddess Gajalakshmī was often carved.[1] The metal industry thus provided employment to a large number of craftsmen.

BEAD-MAKING

In view of the large number of beads found among the ornaments and jewellery of Khajuraho sculptures, bead-making appears to have been an independent industry. That the manufacture of beads is an old art of India is testified to by many protohistoric investigations. Usually the material for bead-making was terracotta, precious metals, ivory, wood, and precious and semi-precious stones. There is nothing in the sculptures to show what materials the beads of Khajuraho were made of, but they certainly provide many shapes such as round, flat, barrel, bi-conical, cardamom-shaped and those resembling the teeth of a rat

CARPENTERS AND WOOD-CARVERS

Carpenters and wood-carvers held an important place in the social life of ancient India. They contributed much to the architecture also and made doors, windows, ploughs, carts, tables, chairs, cots, seats, etc., with various forms and patterns, as profusely depicted in the sculptures.[2] These objects often bear beautiful carvings. The legs of the furniture and wooden clubs were, with a few exceptions, prepared on the lathe, and the groovings were done by the same process. The ingenuity of the carpenters and wood-carvers is reflected more than in anything else in the manufacture of musical instruments (Pl. XIV) and *houdahs*[3] for the royal elephants. They were probably decorated with inlay or veneer.

[1] Cf. Chandella copper-plates published in *E I*, Vols IV, X, XVI and XXV

[2] See chapter on 'Furniture, etc.' for details.

[3] Cf. Khajuraho Museum, No 1318 B, Lak, *Jagati* *lz* lt out; Dula, *Adhis* *lz* lt out

MASONS AND ARCHITECTS

From the building activity of the period we can easily surmise that the masons and architects must have existed as a class by themselves in the contemporary society. The magnificent temples, tanks and *vāpīs* constructed during the Chandella period, leave no doubt of their skill in the building art. Besides religious edifices, wells and tanks, they also built residential houses. Since no archaeological excavation has been done at Khajuraho, which could unearth any residential building, we are not in a position to say anything definite about the actual plan of the domestic and other buildings.[1]

The architects had a great sense of proportion and this is apparent in the construction of temples and tanks. They maintained symmetry in every inch, which shows their knowledge of advanced geometry. This is the secret of their success in constructing imposing yet poised and balanced monuments.

STONE-CARVERS AND SCULPTORS

The art of stone-carving had attained great excellence and quite a number of persons earned their living from it. The stone-carvers carved out the images in the round as well as in high and low relief. Many of the sculptures of Khajuraho can be compared with the best sculptures of any age. The intricate geometrical and floral designs carved in the ceilings have a special charm of their own and the sculptors of Khajuraho seem to have taken delight in making them. They carved out floral and geometrical designs of the stencil pattern on the walls too. The designs appear to have been first outlined on the stone by the master artists using some sharp pointed instrument.[2] In the Viśvanātha temple some unfinished designs on the left wall of the *mandapa* make this very clear. A few sculptured scenes at Khajuraho actually depict stone-workers working on the stone and the master sculptors (*rūpakāras*)[3] preparing the preliminary sketches or ***hastalekha***. An interesting panel[4] portrays a group of four stone-workers engaged in their work. Three of them are standing with chisel and hammer, while the fourth is sitting on a large stone block and cutting it with chisel and hammer. The chisel-marks are clearly visible on the stone which appears to be an architectural piece

[1] Recently, P.W.D. men dug out a mound, about half a furlong to the west of the Jaina group of temples, for laying a road. This revealed a brick building, which appears to have been a residential house. It has rooms of different sizes measuring 5′ × 5′, 5′ × 10′ and 18′ × 18′, along with a verandah and courtyard. The outer wall is more than 3 feet wide, while that of the smaller rooms 1′6″ and the bigger rooms slightly less than 3 feet. Bricks had three standard sizes, namely, 1″ × 6″ × 2″, 10″ × 6″ × 2″, 6″ × 5″ × 2″. They have been joined by a mortar of *chūnam* and *mauranga*. The walls were plastered with the same material and washed. On the outer walls of the building a stone facing of long granite slabs was given.

[2] Before carving any sculpture, a preliminary drawing (*hastalekha*) of the intended design was prepared. An early example of such a preliminary sketch, incised on a stone slab, is found at Nagarjunakonda (C. Sivaramamurti, *Indian Sculpture*, pl. 2).

[3] *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, p. 73.

[4] Khajuraho Museum, No. 1315.

(Photo 53). In the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple two artists have been depicted as being busy preparing a *hastalekha* on a stone slab.[1]

THE POTTER'S ART

The sculptures depict such pottery as cups, jars, handled-jars, spouted vessels, pot-lids and other utensils of every day use. Besides metal, these utensils must have been made of clay also. It is difficult to say anything about the texture of the stuff but as far as the type is concerned, a detailed classification is possible which we shall discuss in the following chapter. Khajuraho potters not only showed their ingenuity in the manufacture of different pottery types, but they also skilfully decorated them with various designs, obviously by incising, stamping or embossing.

WEAVING AND TEXTILES

Weaving has been an old industrial art of India. According to some passages in the *Rigveda*, this art seems to have been much advanced in the Vedic age[2] The shining gold woven cloaks (*hiranya-drāpi*) have been referred to, and in the *Mahābhārata* there is even reference to *manichūra*, probably a fabric with a pearl woven fringe.[3] Indian weavers wove both cotton and silk fabrics and there is hardly a technique or art in fabric-making that was not known to the craftsmen of the past

Seeing the fineness of textiles depicted in the sculptures of Khajuraho, one must praise the skill of the weavers Men and women have been represented as wearing clothes made of different fabrics. They wear richly embroidered garments as well as clothes with various beautiful prints The women of the higher class appear to have used such a fine muslin cloth that the entire body was exposed to view and one can guess the presence of clothes in the sculptures only by their edges and borders. This skill and art of the handloom textiles has now become a thing of the past.

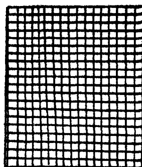
From the sculptures it is difficult to recognise details of the fabrics and the quality of the texture or the material used for the purpose. The sculptures are also silent about the different types of dyes which were used for colouring the textile fabrics. But this is by no means indicative of the absence of a dyeing technology. The people of Khajuraho, with their high aesthetic sense and love for beauty and art, must also have dyed their clothes and garments in different delicate shades, as dyeing has been a flourishing industry in this country since very ancient times, as we learn from literary sources.

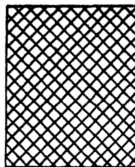
The sculptures of Khajuraho present a rich variety of designs in the textiles. It is, however, very difficult for us to suggest whether the designs were formed in weaving or if they were printed on later. The designs are found only on the fine

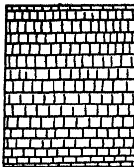
[1] Kand., *Prad.* fz rt m

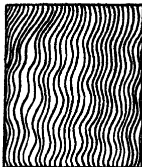
[2] Wilson's *Rigveda*, II, pp. 12, 218, 230

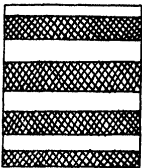
[3] S. Swarup, *Arts and Crafts of India and Pakistan*, p 80

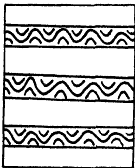

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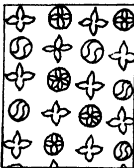

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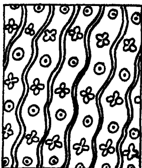

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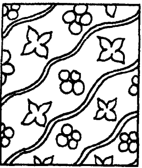

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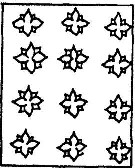

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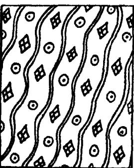

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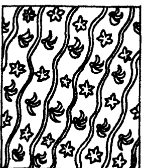

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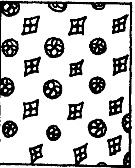

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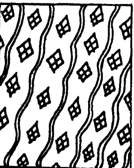

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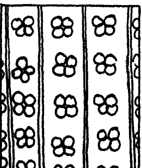

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Plate XX
TEXTILE DESIGNS

variety of cloths. The textiles of coarse variety were generally plain. Seeing the different patterns on the garments in the sculptures, one is easily reminded of the variegated cloth designs of Ajanta.[1] On the basis of designs, Khajuraho textiles can be classified under the following three categories:

(*i*) Cloths with horizontal, vertical or wavy lines.

(*ii*) Cloths with thick horizontal bands.

(*iii*) Cloths with a repetition of floral patterns, sometimes between double wavy lines.

In the first category the lines make a check (Pl. XX, Fig. 1)[2] or criss-cross (Pl. XX, Fig. 2)[3] designs. Some specimens of this category consist of horizontal lines with a number of smaller lines running vertically between them (Pl. XX, Fig. 3).[4] On some cloths, the design is composed of a number of thin wavy lines running all over (Pl. XX, Fig. 4).[5]

The cloths of the second category are decorated with bands, filled with criss-cross (Pl. XX, Fig. 5)[6] or other geometric patterns, consisting of a uniform wavy line and chevrons (Pl. XX, Fig. 6).[7]

The third category represents some of the best designs. Some cloths have double wavy stripes; the space between each has been relieved by flowers and designs of different patterns that consist of long- and round-petalled flowers of three, four, five and even eight petals (Pl. XX, Figs. 9, 10, 12, 13 and 16),[8] small circles with a dot in the centre (Pl. XX, Fig. 8),[9] chevrons and wavy lines within a circle (Pl. XX, Fig. 11),[10] flowers within a circle (Pl. XX, Fig. 14)[11] and diamond patterns divided into four equal parts (Pl. XX, Figs. 14 and 15).[12] On some cloths double wavy strips have been replaced by double straight lines (Pl. XX, Fig. 16),[13] while in others they are not present at all (Pl. XX, Figs. 10 and 14). Similarly, on some cloths the design has been formed by repeating the same pattern (Pl. XX, Fig. 16), while in others, two kinds of patterns have been printed alternately (Pl. XX, Figs. 11-14). In a Khajuraho Museum specimen even three kinds of patterns have been arranged side by side.

The sculptures also show a variety of beautiful border designs in *sārīs* worn by the ladies. (Pl. III, Fig. 9).[14]

[1] For some selected cloth designs from Ajanta, see *I A.*, Vol. LIX, plate facing p. 160 (A and B)

[2] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz. rt. out.

[3] Devi., cella door, right upright.

[4] Viswa., *Adhis* fz. rt. out.

[5] Par, back out.

[6] Ibid, back out

[7] Ibid., back out.

[8] Khajuraho Museum, No. 1328; Par., back out; Ibid, *Prad.* back in; Ibid, *Prad* rt in; Viswa., rt out

[9] Viswa., rt. out.

[10] Khajuraho Museum, No. 1328; Lak., cella door.

[11] Lak., cella door.

[12] Śāntinātha, outside cella, rt.

[13] Par., *Prad.* back in.

[14] Chatur., cella door; Par, *Prad.* rt. in; Ibid., back in; Devi, cella; Viswa, rt out; Chitra., *Antarāla* lt; Kand, *Prad* back in

TAILORING

The advanced textile industry gave rise to the art of tailoring. The use of shaped costumes was not a new thing for Indians. Even the early sculptures of Sanchi testify to the use of cut and sewn garments.[1] In the cave paintings of Ajanta also, the figures have been shown as wearing cut and sewn garments.[2] Khajuraho sculptures undoubtedly show that side by side with unstitched clothes, stitched ones were also used.

ROPE-MAKING

The representation of fine ropes in Khajuraho sculptures is quite abundant. They were needed for making reins for the horses, for fastening the padding or setting the ***houdahs*** on the elephants. The ropes were also used for tying stone pieces and hunted game to bamboo or wooden beams for transportation. They were made by a twisting process as is in use today and were strong and beautiful to look at. A thin string was also made which can be seen as tying the book in the hand of Brahmā.

THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

In the period under review, the leather craft was a sufficiently developed art. The sculptures depict such leather articles as foot-wear,[3] small and big bags,[4] horse-saddles,[5] belts and straps,[6] etc. The bags and saddles were probably singularly fine examples of the leather craft. Sometimes the bordering lines were embossed to make the articles look more beautiful.[7]

COSMETICS AND OIL MANUFACTURE

The people of the time used different cosmetics—sandal paste, powder, collyrium, ointments and different types of dyes for colouring their feet or spotting the forehead. To these should be added scented hair oil, the use of which is presupposed by the elaborate coiffures of the fashionable ladies as seen in the sculptures. The cosmetics appear to have been manufactured by a particular class of persons in large quantities as their consumption apparently appears to have been sufficiently high

THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY

Wine was a favourite drink of the people, probably of all the classes. Liquor distilleries must have been in existence to meet the demands of the consumers.

[1] Motichandra, *Prāchīna Bhāratīya Veśabhūsha*, p 85
[2] *I A*, Vol LIX, p 160
[3] Lak, *Jagatī* fz rt out, Ibid, back and lt out
[4] Pārvatī, rt out, Kand, back rt out
[5] Lak, *Jagatī* fz ft. out, Khajuraho Museum, No 1318B
[6] Khajuraho Museum, No 155; Lak, *Jagatī* fz rt out
[7] Kand, back rt out, Par, *Prad* lt in, *A O C*, pl 57

61 *Divine Couple Allahabad Museum*

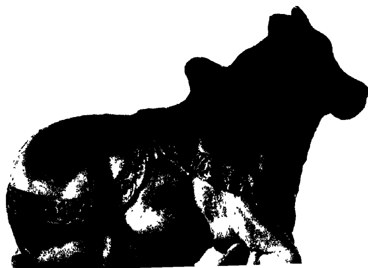


61



62 *Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī*
Khajuraho Museum

62



63 *Nandi, Facing Viśwanātha Temple*

63

The drink appears to have been manufactured in two qualities; one was sweet and costly while the other was cheap and harsh with an annoying odour. In view of the high consumption, as guessed from a number of sculptures as well as the references in the *Prabodhachandrodaya*, it seems that the liquor industry was very prosperous and profitable.[1]

PROFESSIONS

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was the profession of a large number of the populace, as it has been in this country since time immemorial. The attention that the Chandella kings paid to irrigation corroborates this fact. They dug out wells, reservoirs and lakes,[2] and raised embankments to divert the course of the river (Khajuraho Inscription of V.S. 1011, Vs. 26). Wells (*kūpa*), reservoirs (*vāpī*) and lakes (*pushkarinī*) of the Chandella period still survive in Khajuraho and its vicinity. Three spacious reservoirs of Khajuraho, namely, Khajuraho-Sāgara, Sibsāgara and Ratitāla, apart from several old *kūpas* and *vāpīs* still serve the need of the villagers. There used to be a flight of steps in the *kūpas* leading down to the water and one could get water even without the help of the ropes. The tanks, too, were provided with stone steps on all the four sides with occasional carvings on the risers.

CATTLE-REARING

Cattle-rearing, which is associated with agriculture, was also a means of livelihood. The animals reared were taken to the pastures for grazing under the supervision of girls, a practice which may still be seen in Madhya Pradesh. A number of sculptures depicting a lady extricating a thorn[3] probably vaguely reminds one of the shepherd-girls who had to go into the thorny bushes of the forests for grazing their animals.

HUNTING

Khajuraho and its environs abound in dense forests that yielded a good harvest for the hunters. A large number of persons of low caste must have lived by hunting. Apart from the sale of flesh, they could earn a lot by selling the raw hides of animals which were readily purchased by leather-workers. The tribes of Mogiās, Pārdhīs and Baheliās of Madhya Pradesh are still dependent on hunting. Other tribes like the Goṇḍs, Korkus and Bhīls pursue it when they are free from their vocations, such as agriculture and labour.[4] Thin friezes on the temples depict numerous hunting scenes, a detailed account of which has already been given.[5]

[1] See also the section on 'Drinking' in the chapter on 'Games and Amusements.'
[2] *E.I.*, Vol. I, pp. 325-330.
[3] Chitra., lt. out; Ibid., rt. out; Vam., back rt. out; Ibid., lt. out; Par., lt. out
[4] *Bull. Tribal Research Institute* (Chhindwara), Vol. II, No. 3, p. 28.
[5] See the section on 'Hunting' in the chapter on 'Games and Amusements.'

TEACHING

School scenes at Khajuraho show that some persons devoted themselves to imparting education to the children and adults.[1] The scholars who were well-versed in the *Sāstras* received royal patronage.[2]

PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

The words *vaidya* (physician) and *asva-vaidya* (veterinary surgeon) have been referred to in the Chandella inscriptions.[3] Certain original works were also written on *Ayurveda* during the age of the Chandellas. Notable among these is *Rasārnava.* Some sculptures of Khajuraho also corroborate the existence of physicians and surgeons, although it is not possible to get any detailed information from them. In some of the scenes a surgeon is performing an operation on the sole of the leg of a lady with the help of a knife. He has a leather bag hung on his shoulder and which must have contained operating instruments, healing ointments, and other necessary materials.[4]

WASHERMEN AND BARBERS

Although there is no depiction of washermen in the sculptures, the existence of the profession can be guessed from the variety of clothes worn by the people. The washermen could handle probably the finest types of garments without causing any damage to their quality. Similarly the barbers were also efficient in their art. The sculptures present many styles of beards, moustaches and hair-cuts.[5] Chandella epigraphs also refer to the barbers (*nāpitas*).[6]

DOMESTIC SERVANTS

It appears from the sculptures of Khajuraho that rich persons invariably employed domestic servants in their personal service. Traditionally the *sūdras* used to be such servants of the higher classes. The domestic servants were both male and female. They also served as toilet attendants and *chhatra-* and *chaurī-*bearers. The servants used to attend on their masters with folded hands, in readiness of compliance. On making any mistake they were taken to task by the masters. In a sculpture in the Dūlādeva temple, a man is apparently scolding his servant; the latter is kneeling down with folded hands.[7] The servants were also employed for looking after the children of their masters.[8] Female servants are often shown as carrying water from the well in jars placed on the head.[9]

[1] *Bhāratī*, No. 4, pp. 81-82 See chapter on 'Education and Learning' for details
[2] Cf. *E.I.*, Vol. I, p. 139, Vss 53-54
[3] S. K. Mitra, op. cit., p. 160.
[4] Pārvatī, rt. out.
[5] Cf. *J.U.P.H.S.*, Vol. III (N.S), pt II, pl. VI See also the chapter on 'Hair-style'
[6] Cf. S. K. Mitra, op. cit., p. 160.
[7] Dula., rt. out.
[8] Lak., rt. out.
[9] Khajuraho Museum, No. 1527, Chitra, *Adhis* fz lt out

LABOURERS

Some sculptures depict labourers engaged in their work. They worked in large numbers in the construction of temples and other buildings. In the temples of Khajuraho the sculptures and carvings appear to have been first finished on the ground and then fixed in their proper places. In some sculptures, labourers have been actually shown as carrying a finished stone piece, hung from a wooden beam, to the construction site (Photos 53 and 54).[1]

MUSICIANS AND DANCERS

Many scenes in the sculptures depict professional musicians and dancers. They used to give their performances at private gatherings, in temples and royal *raṅgaśālās*. There were acrobatic dancers also who amazed the gentry by their miraculous feats. Bigger temples used to have their own dancing girls, many of whom are portrayed on the temple walls.

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

A large number of the people served the state as their profession. Some joined the military and some were employed in the civil departments. The administrative machinery of the Chandellas, as gleaned from their inscriptions, required a number of high and petty officers. Khajuraho sculptures depict numerous scenes of soldiers and occasionally civil officers in the political scenes.[2]

[1] Viswa., fz. rt. out; Khajuraho Museum, No. 1315; Dula, fz. lt. out.
[2] Lak., *Man.* fz balcony lt. in; Śāntinātha, *Man* fz. in.

Chapter 11

FURNITURE AND HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES

GENERALLY wood has been the medium of manufacturing furniture and various other articles of every day use. Since it is a perishable material, it is futile to look for material evidence of wood furniture and other objects in archaeological excavations. The information of literature also remains inadequate for want of visual examples. The contemporary sculptures or paintings, if any, are the best sources for getting a correct idea about the make and use of such objects. The sculptures of Khajuraho, which deal with everyday life of the people, have many scenes in which the furniture, utensils and other smaller objects of day to day use, form a part of the whole composition.

FURNITURE

TABLES

The sculptures reveal that wooden tables were made and used. The remarkable thing in this regard is the knowledge of folding technique, so that these could easily be carried from one place to the other. The folding tables had two pairs of cross-legs, which maintained a plain board at a convenient height (Pl. XIX, Fig. 26).[1] The tables were generally placed between two persons sitting on the ground. It was occasionally covered with a table-cloth.[2] The legs were sometimes decorated and appear to have been prepared on a lathe (Photo 38).[3]

The depiction of folding tables is also found in the sculptures of the Bhubaneśvara

[1] Viswa, *Adhis.* fz rt. out; Ibid., *Man* balcony fz. rt. in; modern temple near Par.

[2] Adi., rt out. In Jaina temples the folding table (*sthāpanā* or *sthāpanāchārya*) is a symbolical representation of the *āchārya* that a Jaina monk keeps in front while giving a discourse (U. P. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 113).

[3] Viswa., fz. in; Kand., *Prad.* fz. rt. in.

temples. Here, the tables have been used for playing chess, dice or keeping a role of paper. In the Mukteśwara temple, the table serves the purpose of a book-stand.[1]

SEATS

The seats (*āsana*)[2] of Khajuraho are quite different from modern chairs, as they had no legs or arms. They consist of a thick cushion with a long slanting back to lean against (Pl. XIX, Fig. 27).[3] A few varieties of the seats are high, but they too are without legs. The surface of the front and sides was carved with various designs (Pl. XIX, Fig. 24).[4] There was a back also, added to one of the longer sides. In certain specimens, the side facing the front has a slight curve (Pl. XIX, Fig. 25),[5] so that the legs could conveniently be placed on the ground. In some seats of this type, the front was also given a rounded facing.[6]

It appears from Khajuraho sculptures that usually thick cushions were used as comfortable seats. They appear to have a covering of cloth which was sumptuously decorated (Pl. XIX, Figs. 19-21).[7] It is difficult to say anything about the material of which these cushioned seats were made. Probably the lower part was made of wood and the upper portion was thickly padded. On these seats one could sit in *lalitāsana* or *mahārājalīlā*. One variety of the seat was like a cushioned *morhā*. It was comparatively high and was decorated with criss-cross and floral designs (Pl. XIX, Fig. 23).[8] One could sit on it with both legs pendant.

There is no example of arm-rests on the seats or chairs sculptured in Khajuraho temples. The same is the case with contemporaneous sculptures of the Bhubaneśvara temples.[9] The Amaravati sculptures of more ancient days depict a rich variety of seats, thrones and benches with artistically designed backs and arm-rests. The representative types have been illustrated in Sivaramamurti's work.[10] A good number of thrones with decorated backs will be found depicted on the Gupta gold coins and in Ajanta paintings.[11]

Khajuraho sculptures also depict a particular type of seat which is round in shape and the middle portion has been narrowed (Pl. XIX, Fig. 18).[12] From the shape and appearance such seats (*morhās*) appear to have been manufactured of cane and bamboo. They may be identified with the *vetrāsana* of

[1] *Indo Aryans*, Vol I, p. 255.
[2] *E.I.*, Vol. I, p. 209.
[3] Free sculpture, Jaina temples, Viswa., fz. lt. out, Ibid, rt. out.
[4] Viswa., fz. ft. rt. out.
[5] Mahādeva, cella door, lower lintel
[6] Ibid., cella door, lower lintel.
[7] Modern structure before Par.
[8] At the same place
[9] *Indian Studies*, etc., Vol. II, No. 2, p. 328.
[10] *Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum* (1956), pl. XII.
[11] See Vidya Prakash, 'Some Aspects of Material Life on Gupta Coins,' *J N.S I.*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 293-95, figs. 4-19, 28, 62-64.
[12] Khajuraho Museum, No. 55.

Kālidāsa.[1] Somewhat similar types of *morhās*, with a narrow middle and the seat and base almost equal in size, have been depicted on several Gupta coins.[2]

BEDSTEADS AND FOOT-STOOLS

The bedsteads (*śaiyyā*)[3] depicted in Khajuraho sculptures are simple and unassuming. They are not different from the modern *chārpāī* or *takhtaposha*, being wooden frames supported on four legs. The bedsteads had either a rope matting stretched on the frame (Pl. XXI, Fig. 1)[4] or wooden boards (Pl. XXI, Fig. 3).[5] Often there was a low board (perhaps cushioned) attached to one of the smaller sides of the cot. It was either vertical (Pl. XIX, Fig. 29) or slanting (Pl. XXI, Fig. 2). Two of our illustrations may show that a thick padding and bedsheet was spread on the cot. The latter was decorated.

The foot-stool (*pātalapādapīṭha*)[6] was an important item of furniture in ancient India. For divinities the most appropriate foot-stool was a lotus. In Khajuraho sculptures the representation of foot-stools is very rare. Its usual shape appears to have been round with the upper face padded. It was decorated by carving attractive designs on it (Pl. XIX, Fig. 22).[7]

UTENSILS

According to their purpose, the vessels are variously shaped. In the beginning they were made of clay, but later were copied in more permanent materials such as metal. The importance of the potter's art for the reconstruction of the material culture of the people is now unanimously admitted. Ancient pots and utensils, by their curved contours and painted, incised or embossed designs, reveal the aesthetic progress of their users. The study of domestic vessels is generally made from the fragmentary pot-sherds discovered in archaeological excavations. It may be highly rewarding if the delineations of the pots and utensils in the sculptures and paintings (wherever available) are also studied to corroborate the typological peculiarities of the pot-sherds. Such representations are usually distinct and complete and leave no room for speculation. More often than not they also reveal the actual use of the utensils. The sculptures of Khajuraho depict numerous vessels which include different varieties of jars, spouted vessels, cups, lids, etc. Generally they figure in the hands of gods, goddesses and Nāyikās. Some varieties of cups and wine-jars may be found in the drinking scenes. It is difficult to say anything about the material used in making them, but probably metal and clay were both used for the purpose. The pots intended to have

[1] Cf. B S Upadhyaya, *India in Kalidasa*, p 215

[2] *B M C G D*, pls X 6, XIII 6 See also author's paper in *J.N S.I*, vol XXIII, p. 278

[3] *E I*, Vol I, p 209; *Raghuvamśa*, V 65.

[4] Lak, *Jagati* fz rt out.

[5] Śāntinātha, lt in

[6] *E I*, Vol I, p 209, Vs. 10

[7] Devi., cella frame.

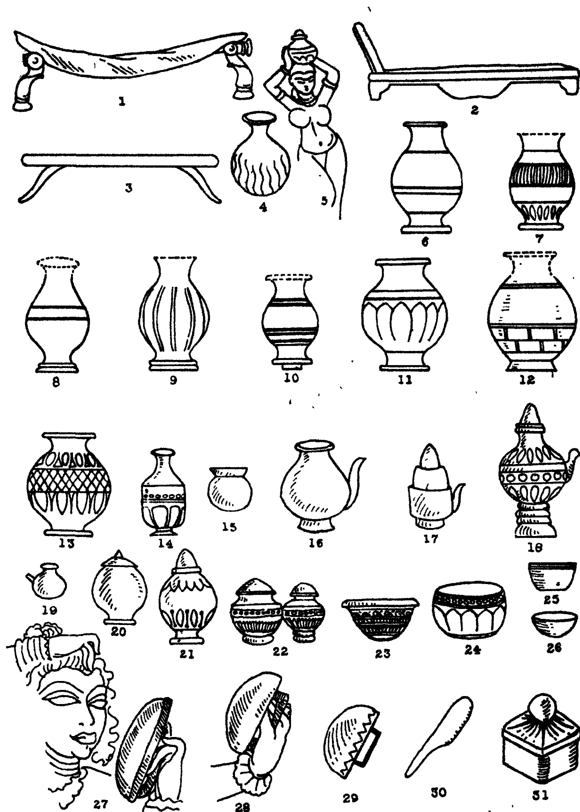


Plate XXI
FURNITURE, UTENSILS AND TOILET ARTICLES

been held by gods must have been made of metal only. According to a reference in the *Yuktikalpataru*, the drinking cups for royal personages should be made of gold, silver, crystal or glass (*kānakaṃ rājatañchaiva sphāṭikaṃ kāchameva cha*).[1]

We describe below the types of vessels depicted in the Khajuraho sculptures:

JARS

1. Jar with a beaded rim, narrow neck, globular body and rounded base. The lower portion of the jar is decorated with vertical wavy lines (Pl. XXI, Fig. 4).[2] This type appears to have been intended for fetching water from the well or tank. In a Khajuraho Museum sculpture,[3] a lady is depicted as carrying a somewhat similar type of jar on her head (Pl. XXI, Fig. 5).

2. Jar with a beaded rim, rounded but slightly enlongated body and flat disc base. It is externally decorated with four thick horizontal lines (Pl. XXI, Fig. 6).[4] Sometimes the space between two lines is filled in by a number of vertical strokes, and a pattern of floral designs has been added near the bottom (Pl. XXI, Fig. 7).[5] In a few varieties of this jar, the flat base has corrugations (Pl. XXI, Figs. 8 and 9).[6] They are also decorated with horizontal or double vertical lines on the exterior. One variety is found with a ring base and a decoration of double horizontal bands (Pl. XXI, Fig. 10).[7]

3. Beautifully decorated jar with beaded rim, round body and ring or disc base. The outer decoration imitates the lotus (Pl. XXI, Fig. 11)[8] or brick pattern (Pl. XXI, Fig. 12).[9] In one variety the decoration consists of criss-cross, flower petals, circles and triangles (Pl. XXI, Fig. 13).

4. Vessel with splayed-out rim, wide mouth, rounded body and round base (Pl. XXI, Fig. 15).[10]

5. A pleasing shape of water vessel appears in the hand of a deity. It is longish in shape with cylindrical sides, long narrow neck and low pedestal-base (Pl. XXI, Fig. 14).[11] The vessel has a decoration of circles and flower petals on the exterior and is perfect in proportion.

SPOUTED VESSELS

Side by side with the other vessels, spouted ones were also used. With the addition of a spout the water or any other liquid could be slowly drained out from the

[1] *Yuktikalpataru*, quoted in *Indian Studies, etc.*, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 338.
[2] Devi, cella
[3] Khajuraho Museum, No. 1525
[4] Devi, lt. out, lower band.
[5] Ibid., back out, lower band
[6] Ibid., lt. out, middle band.
[7] Ibid., lt. out, middle band.
[8] Ibid., rt out, middle band
[9] Ibid., lt. out, lower band.
[10] Lak., lt. out.
[11] Viswa., *Prad* rt. in.



64 *Ganesa and Vighnesvari* 64

65 *Rāma and Sītā, Pārśvanātha Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*

66 *Vishnu as* Maunavratin *Khajuraho Museum (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*





67



67 *Varaha. Varaha Temple*

68 *Hanumana Image. Hanumana Temple*

69 *Krsnalilā Panel. Modern Construction South of the Pārsvanatha Temple (Photo: Rana)*

68

69



pot, and thus the use of a spoon or such other object was unnecessary. The spouted vessels depicted in Khajuraho sculptures are generally plain and utilitarian. They have a beaded rim, slightly elongated neck, round body and a raised base (Pl. XXI, Fig. 16).[1] Another variety of the spouted vessel has slightly convex shoulders, straight sides and flat base (Pl. XXI, Fig. 17).[2] A handle is attached to the rim. One spouted vessel (Pl. XXI, Fig. 18),[3] held by Brahmā, is lavishly decorated with horizontal lines, circles and flower petals. It has a double rim, vertical neck and pedestal base. Spouted vessels with a globular body and rounded base (Pl. XXI, Fig 19)[4] were also used for pouring wine into the drinking cups.

VESSELS WITH LID

Some vessels have been depicted with lids. They appear to have had a flange round the neck to receive the lid. Possibly they were used like the *loṭās* (small globular drinking pots) of modern times. One such vessel is shown being carried by a lady on her palm, indicating that it contained some valuable or costly liquid. It is also possible that the lady is going to worship and pour water on the deity One of our illustrations (Pl. XXI, Fig. 20)[5] resembles a *loṭā* depicted in Orissan temples [6] The lid covering it is like an upside-down dish with a knob in the centre. Other lids are either somewhat conical (Pl. XXI, Fig. 21)[7] or convex (Pl. XXI, Fig. 22) [8]

BASINS AND BOWLS

Basins generally appear in the hands of Gaṇeśa. Their shape must have been copied from those used by the common people. We illustrate two principal types. One has an emphatic out-turned rim and a rounded bottom. It contracts downwards (Pl. XXI, Fig. 23).[9] The other has a featureless rim, slightly convex sides, and a flat base (Pl. XXI, Fig. 24) [10] Both are richly decorated

The representation of cups is found either in the drinking scenes or in the sculptures of Kuvera, the god of wealth. They have either a flat (Pl. XXI, Fig 25)[11] or a round (Pl. XXI, Fig. 26)[12] base with a featureless rim. Sometimes the outer rim is decorated with three bands

[1] Devi, lt out, lower band
[2] Ibid, cella
[3] Khajuraho Museum, No 1378
[4] Viswa, *Adhis* fz. lt. out
[5] Dula, back rt out, middle band
[6] *Indian Studies, etc*, Vol II, No 3, pl XXXIV.
[7] Devi, cella door
[8] Khajuraho Museum (number could not be traced)
[9] The sculpture of Gaṇeśa, set in the *Jagati* of Kand, ft lt out
[10] Khajuraho Museum (number could not be traced), *H T*, Vol II, pl XXXVI
[11] Image of Kuvera, Khajuraho Museum
[12] Viswa, *Adhis* fz. lt out.



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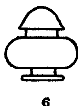
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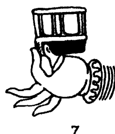
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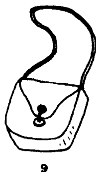
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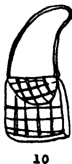
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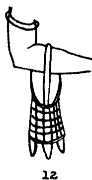
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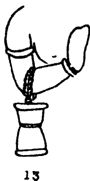
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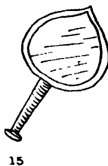
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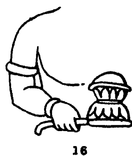
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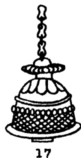
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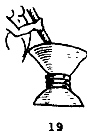
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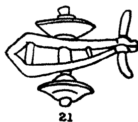
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Plate XXII
MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

The complexities of life necessitate many articles of everyday use. Such articles depicted in Khajuraho sculptures are just common objects that are needed in any advanced society. In modern times a far greater number and variety of such objects are found. But this should not lessen one's interest in their study. One is bound to be interested in these articles, howsoever common, when it is borne in mind that they existed some one thousand years ago, and survive even today with certain variations and modifications.

PILLOWS AND CUSHIONS

Pillows and cushions were used by the people as bedsteads and seats. They are freely depicted in the sculptures.[1] From their appearance they look to be well stuffed. The cushions can be clearly seen in the sculptures of gods and goddesses seated on a throne. The coverlets were decorated with beautiful patterns.

UMBRELLAS AND FLY-WHISKS

The umbrella (*chhatra*) was as much a means of protection from the sun and rain, as an insignia of royalty. In the Khajuraho sculptures the umbrellas are depicted as being held over the king or the commanding prince in the army. They were also held over religious *gurus* by their devotees.[2] The *chhatra* symbolised dignity and mark of respect. The umbrellas of Khajuraho are convex, of the form of a mushroom with generally a plain and tapering stem (*ḍaṇḍa*), turned on the lathe (Pl. XXII, Fig. 1).[3] We could not recognise any traces of ribs. Similar umbrellas were used in the Gupta period and they have been depicted on some Gupta coins and in Ajanta paintings.[4] The *chhatra* depicted in Orissan sculptures and referred to by Mitra has two tassels of yak's tail as ornament. The sliding frame is visible in some specimens.[5]

The fly-whisk (*chāmara*) is also associated with royalty besides being an object of utility. In Khajuraho sculptures the *chāmara* or *chaurī* consisted of a handle, both plain and ornate, surmounted by a mass of flowing hair (Pl. XXII, Fig. 2).[6] The sculptures depict a *chāmaradhāriṇī* as gently waving the fly-whisk.

The fly-whisk has been delineated frequently in ancient Indian sculpture from the earliest times, but there is hardly any notable development or change in its style and make through the ages. The *chaurī* in the hand of the Dīdāraganja yakshī[7] is almost of the same type as that in the hand of the queen on Gupta coins and the paintings of Ajanta ;[8] and the same shape continues to appear in the sculptures of the medieval period.

[1] Lak , *Jagatī* fz lt out , Śāntināthа, rt in , Khajuraho Museum (number could not be traced)
[2] Lak , *Jagatī* fz lt. out
[3] Khajuraho Museum, No 1318B
[4] See author's paper in *J N S I* , vol XXIII, pp 294-95, figs 56, 57, 66 and 67
[5] *Indian Studies, etc* ,Vol II, No. 2, p 334
[6] Kand , cella door , Lak , rt out , K M Munshi, *The Saga of Indian Sculpture*, pl 179b
[7] N. R Ray, *Maurya and Śuṅga Art*, fig 30 , L. Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, Vol I, pl 9
[8] *J N S I.*, Vol XXIII, pp 282-83.

FLOWER-VASES

The flower-vase has been depicted only at one place, in the Viśwanātha temple (Pl. XXII, Fig. 3).[1] It is held by a lady attendant; probably she is about to place it at some appropriate place.

MIRRORS AND COMBS

Numerous sculptures of Khajuraho depict charming ladies, standing and beholding the reflection of their countenances in a mirror. This is such a catchy pose for an artist that a lady looking into the mirror practically became a motif in Indian art of all ages. It is frequently represented in the art of Amaravati, Ajanta, Ellora, Bhubaneśwara, Belur and Halebid. The mirrors of Khajuraho do not furnish any variety. They are always round and convex with metallic mountings. There is invariably a handle at the back (Pl. XXI, Figs. 27-29). The mountings are sometimes decorated (Pl. XXI, Fig. 29).[2] The convexity of the mirrors shows that they were made not of glass but of some metal. In ancient India highly polished metal plates were used for the purpose of manufacturing mirrors.[3] Even in modern times, mirrors of metal are made at some places, such as Aramula in Travancore. They do not distort the reflection in any way.[4]

Convex mirrors are found depicted in the Rājārānī temple of Bhubaneśwara, contemporary with Khajuraho.[5] But in the medieval sculptures of Rajasthan, flat mirrors have also been shown.[6] It appears that both types of mirrors were used in the period under review, but the people of the Chandella period had a preference for convex ones.

The beautiful hair styles of both men and women seen in the sculptures of Khajuraho presuppose the use of combs. But the actual representation of the comb is very rare. We could find only one sculpture in which a lady has been depicted as standing with a mirror and comb in her hands. Obviously she is combing her hair. The comb is of the longer variety, with a handle to grip while combing (Pl. XXI, Fig. 30).[7]

CASKETS AND JEWELLERY BOXES

Different types of caskets have been depicted in the Khajuraho sculptures. Mostly they appear in the toilet scenes and hence were obviously intended for keeping toilet requisites. A very common variety of the casket imitates a flower (Pl. XXII, Fig. 4). A ring or strap was attached at the bottom to enable it

[1] Viswa., *Mahaman*. lt in

[2] Dula, rt out

[3] In the Indus Valley civilization handled mirrors of copper were used They were placed in the burials along with the dead (M Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, p 53)

[4] Cf. Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol I, Pt I, p. 12.

[5] K C Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneśwara*, fig 67.

[6] *Marg*, Vol. XII, No 2, p. 30, fig 1

[7] Viswa, rt out, upper band

to be held firmly by the hand (Pl. XXII, Fig. 5). Some of the caskets are square in shape and have decorations on the outside (Pl. XXII, Fig. 7).[1] One variety resembles a miniature pot with a vertical neck, convex sides and pedestal base. It is covered with a lid (Pl. XXII, Fig. 6).[2] A few small boxes shown in the hands of ladies appear to have been used for keeping jewellery. They are also square in shape, with a round knob attached to the cover (Pl. XXI, Fig. 31).[3]

BAGS AND BASKETS

There are many representations of bags, probably of leather, in the sculptures of Khajuraho. They are almost invariably shown held by the attendant of a lady of rank (Photo 21).[4] As the lady is shown at her toilet, these bags also appear to have contained toilet requisites. The bags of Khajuraho are square in shape with a covering flap and a means for locking. A long strap is invariably attached for hanging it from the shoulder (Pl. XXII, Fig. 9).[5] Sometimes on the edges, a border line was embossed. In some specimens a check pattern was embossed on the larger faces of the bag (Pl. XXII, Fig. 10),[6] which greatly enhanced its beauty. The bags of Khajuraho largely resemble the vanity bags used by the fashionable ladies of today.

Baskets, probably of cane and bamboo, are represented at several places in our sculptures. We could collect three varieties. One is a simple round basket with a round handle for gripping with the fingers while carrying (Pl. XXII, Fig. 11).[7] The second variety resembles the first one, but it has the addition of three conical legs and is slung from the hand (Pl. XXII, Fig. 12).[8] The third variety is of the shape of a *damarū*, being narrow in the middle. It was also slung from the hand. Its handle imitates a garland of leaves (Pl. XXII, Fig. 13).[9] The baskets are very small in size in proportion to the human body. From the context, they appear to have been used for carrying flowers or some such articles for making an offering to the deity

WATER-BOTTLES

Some sculptures of Khajuraho depict a longish jar inside a net held by a man (Pl. XXII, Fig. 14).[10] We feel that this served the purpose of a water-bottle. While going on a long journey people carried with them a pot full of water. For

[1] Adi, lt out, lower band
[2] Viswa, back lt out, upper band
[3] *H M S*, pl 35
[4] Par, rt out, Ibid, *Prad* lt in, Lak, *Mahaman* bracket, *A O C*, pl 57, Indian Museum, No A25229, *H T.*, pl XV, Viswa, *Prad.* back in
[5] Par, *Prad* lt in
[6] Indian Museum, No A25229
[7] Krishna-*līlā* panel, fitted in modern construction in Jaina temple
[8] Śāntinātha, ft inside.
[9] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel
[10] Lak, *Jagatī* fz rt out

convenience it was placed inside a net. This device still survives in the villages where vessels full of milk or curds are placed inside a net of cords and hung from the roof of the hut to protect the contents from animals like dogs and cats.

FANS

The fan (*vyajana*)[1] has always been a necessity in India which has a hot climate. They were made of cloth, peacock feathers, cane, bamboo, palm leaf, etc. According to a reference in the *Sabdakalpadruma* of Rājā Rādhākānta Deva: 'The palm leaf fan overcomes disturbances of all three humours, and is light and agreeable; the bamboo fan causes heat and irritability, and promotes inordinate secretion of the airy and bilious humours; the cane, the cloth and the peacock feather fans, overcome disturbances of the three humours; the hair fan is invigorating, &c.'[2]

The fan depicted in Khajuraho sculptures is quite simple. It consists of a light disc of the shape of a *pippala* leaf (heart-shaped) mounted on a long slender handle of wood (Pl. XXII, Fig. 15).[3] For making the fan-disc, palm or matting appears to have been used, while cane or bamboo was probably used for making the rim. The wooden handle tapers slightly, with a knob at the end From its appearance it seems that the handle was turned on a lathe.

INCENSE-BURNERS

Incense-burners were required for the detailed rituals of worship. The one depicted in a worship scene is highly artistic, imitating two lotuses joined together, the lower one being inverted (Pl. XXII, Fig. 16).[4] A plain handle is attached to the basal rim that curves slightly at the end. The incense-burner is held in the right hand of one of the persons who have come to worship the *liṅgam*.

BELLS

There are numerous representation of bells, obviously of metal, in Khajuraho sculptures, in various contexts. From the depiction of ornate bells on the pillars of the Ghaṇṭāī temple (Photo 55) one may be inclined to infer that probably similar bells used to be hung from the roofs of the temples by means of chains—a practice which is most zealously followed even at the present time. The bells were also tied round the necks of elephants. The smaller bells were used in the temple rituals. The shape of Khajuraho bells does not differ from the modern ones. The bells hung in the temples (Pl. XXII, Fig. 17)[5] or those used in worship rituals (Pl. XXII, Fig. 18)[6] were lavishly decorated with various patterns, but the two differed largely in size.

[1] Quoted in *Indian Studies, etc*, Vol II, No 2, p 331
[2] Ibid
[3] Viswa, *Man* balcony rt in
[4] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel
[5] Ghaṇṭāī temple, pillars
[6] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel

MORTARS AND PESTLES

At one place in the Lakshmaṇa temple we could recognise the depiction of a wooden mortar (*okhalī*) and pestle (*paharuā*). The Khajuraho specimen of the *okhalī* (Pl. XXII, Fig. 19)[1] is just like its modern counterpart. It was used for husking the corn with a pestle or *paharuā*. Two persons, each with a pestle, could simultaneously husk the corn in one mortar.

CHURNING-STICKS

The churning instrument—a churning-stick, like the one used today—has been depicted in Krishṇa-*līlā* scenes. The churning-stick is worked in an earthen pot with the help of a rope.[2] It is a familiar method of churning milk in Indian villages even at the present time.

PLOUGHS

We did not find the representation of the plough (*hala*) in its proper context in the sculptures, i.e., with the farmers, ploughing the field. But its shape and type can be surmised from the representation of the *hala* in the hands of Balarāma, whose attribute it is.[3] It appears to be made of wood and iron and is not different from the conventional ploughs of today.

SICKLES

The sickle is used for mowing and reaping the harvest. The one depicted in Khajuraho sculptures is of crooked shape, sharp at the end, with a small wooden handle (Pl. XXII, Fig. 20).[4] This, too, is no different from its modern counterpart.

CHISELS AND HAMMERS

Chisels and hammers may be seen in the scenes showing stone-workers working on the stone (Photo 53).[5] The chisel depicted is no different from its modern counterpart, in as much as it is a small round bar of metal, sharpened at the lower edge. The hammer, of course, is different from modern ones. It is a single piece of metal with a heavy head and a short handle for holding, which appears to have been extended from the same piece by beating.

THE BAHANGĪ

A familiar method of transportation of heavy objects from one place to another, was by the use of a *bahangī*. It was a strong pole to the middle of which the object to be transported was tied with a rope. The two ends of the pole were

[1] Lak , *Jagatī* fz rt. out
[2] Cf. Khajuraho Museum, No. 1350
[3] *A O C* , fig 55
[4] Khajuraho Museum, No. 868
[5] Ibid , No. 1315.

placed on the shoulders of two or more men while carrying the heavy object. The number of persons depended upon the weight of the object. The persons who were engaged in lifting the weight usually carried sticks for occasionally resting the pole on it in order to relax (Photo 54). Usually the sculptures depict the transportation of architectural fragments of stone, probably from the workshop to the building site.[1] Hunted animals were similarly transported as mentioned earlier.[2] One of the earliest representations of this mode of transportation is found on a Bharhut medallion.[3] *Bahangīs* are still used, generally for lifting water, and are not things of the past only.

CARTS

The depiction of a cart as a conveyance is not to be found in Khajuraho sculptures. But a simpler variety of the same is depicted in a Krishṇa-*līlā* scene. It is a two-wheeled vehicle with a yoke, intended to be drawn by a pair of bullocks (Pl. XXII, Fig. 21).[4] The notable feature of the cart is the solid wheels without spokes. Such wheels are still employed in some regions of India, but they are largely being supplanted by spoked wheels. It appears that the general form of bullock-carts has undergone no appreciable change within the course of the last several hundred years.

HOUDĀHS

A ***houdāh*** or housing was placed on the back of the elephant for the dignitaries to sit in. They are beautiful examples of the carpenters' and the ivory-carvers' art. Usually, the ***houdāh*** was square with two cross-bars on the vertical sides.[5] Sometimes the sides, instead of being vertical, flared out.[6] Some ***houdāhs*** resemble a seat with a vertical back-slab.[7]

[1] Khajuraho Museum; Chitra, *Adhis* fz ft lt out, Viswa, *Adhis* fz rt out
[2] Supra, p 77.
[3] L Bachhofer, op cit, pl 30, bottom left
[4] Krishṇa-*līlā* panel fitted in a Jaina temple
[5] Lak, *Jagati* fz. ft lt. out
[6] Dula., *Adhis* fz lt. out
[7] Lak., *Jagati* fz lt out.

Chapter 12

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

THE TEMPLES of Khajuraho invariably depict a bearded man sitting in *padmāsana* and holding a manuscript in his right hand that is slightly raised.[1] In all probability he is reading the manuscript loudly to a man who is sitting near him. Since these sculptures appear at a very important place, namely, on the decorative frame of the main image inside the cella, one may be tempted to believe that the person represented was probably a learned Brahmin, who was well versed in ancient Scriptures and *Sāstras*, and that he was specially appointed in the temple. It is evident from the Chandella records that the rulers of this dynasty were great patrons of art, literature and learned scholars.[2] The royal encouragement produced dramatists like Krishṇa Miśra, poets like Mādhava,[3] Nandana and Rāma,[4]

[1] On the frame of the sanctum image Cf the sculpture of the Konaraka temple in which a *guru* is sitting in *padmāsana* holding a manuscript in his right hand He is obviously reading the manuscript to a disciple who is sitting in front of him (A K Coomaraswamy, *Viśvakarmā*, pl. 72a)

[2] Dhaṅga, besides several other learned persons and those well versed in the *Śāstras*, patronised the poets Śrī Nandana and Śrī Rāma in his court The latter had received the title of '*Sāhityaratnākara*,' i e , ocean of learning

तार्किरिक: प्रवर सावर वंश जन्मा श्री नदन: कविवर भूत्कविचक्रवर्ती।
तस्यात्मज. समजनिश्रुतपारदृश्वा श्रीमास्तपोधिकबलो वलभद्रनामा ॥

E I., Vol I, p 146, Vs 57

सूनु: सूनृतगीर्गिरींद्र महिमा भद्रस्य तस्या
भवद्भूपालैर्भुविपजितांध्रिरनघ: साहित्यरत्नाकर : ।
श्रीरामो रमणीयसूक्तिरचनाचातुर्यधुर्य.कृती
तेनयं विहिता प्रशस्तिरचना भक्त्यालये शूलिन: ॥

Ibid , Vs. 58.

Paramardideva also appointed Gadādhara who was 'Chief of Poets' (*Kavi Chakravarti*) and the 'first among the learned' (*vidyāvatām sa paramaḥ*) as the great minister of peace and war (Bateśwar stone Inscription of Paramardideva, V.S 1252, *E I.*, Vol. I, p. 211, Vs. 30, L. 22)

[3] *E.I.*, Vol. I, p. 134, Vs 47.

[4] See footnote 2 above.

grammarian like Deddhā,[1] and many anonymous architects and sculptors

Information regarding the subjects taught may be inferred from the sculptures, of course with their limitations. The knowledge of arms (*astravidyā*) was imparted to the Kshatriyas and others, such as Kāyasthas.[2] The very fact that the fighting scenes, the soldiers with varied weapons and military processions, have been sculptured on most of the temple walls, tends to show that Military Science was probably an important feature of education. There are several sculptures which depict ladies also carrying swords, daggers and bows,[3] as mentioned before. This shows that probably a knowledge of arms was imparted to the ladies too, a tradition which continued in high Kshatriya families down to the advent of the British rule.[4]

The subjects of study must have included the Fine Arts. In view of the artistically excellent sculptures and vibrant architecture of Khajuraho, it is needless to say that education in these arts must have been given by very expert sculptors and architects. Painting (*chitrakalā*) was also learnt with interest and devotion and was probably more popular with the ladies. In a scene in the Viśwanātha temple[5] a lady has been shown before a paint-board with a brush in her hand. This sculpture indicates the use of water-colours The fact that line drawing was also practised is proved by certain incision drawings on the floors of some temples.[6]

In *sangīta-kalā*, both vocal and instrumental music were equally popular and might well have been the subjects of study. The sculptures present a large variety of musical instruments of the percussive, pneumatic, vibratory and resonatory classes. Certain carvings of Khajuraho depict scenes where singing is apparently going on. A large number of dancing scenes at Khajuraho make it evident that dancing was a highly developed and popular art.[7] From a scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple it appears that regular dance classes were organised during this period (Photo 30). The above account may thus show that besides several *vidyās*, different *lalita-kalās* were also probably the subjects of study. The Fine Arts were particularly taught to the members of the royal family. Chandella rulers have been described as the store of arts (*kalānāṃ nidhih*)[8] and well versed in arts (*pravīṇaḥ kalāsu*).[9]

Let us now try to find out if the sculptures have anything to tell about the organisation of schools, students, teachers, etc. There is an important sculpture in the Lakshmaṇa temple depicting a school scene (Photo 56).[10] The *āchārya*

[1] *E I*, Vol I, p. 134, Vs 47
[2] Ibid, Vol I, p 335, Vs 25, L 12
[3] Chitra, cella, Devi, lt out, top band; Dula, back rt out
[4] A S Altekar, *Education in Ancient India* (1948), p 223
[5] Viswa, lt out
[6] See Chapter on 'Music, Dance and Painting'
[7] Vidya Prakash, 'Education as Depicted in Khajuraho Sculptures,' *Bhārati*, No 4, p 80
[8] *E I.*, Vol I, p. 198, Va. 9, L. 6
[9] Ibid., p. 335, Vs 25, L. 12.
[10] Lak, S E sub shrine, east out

is sitting in the centre, surrounded by about a dozen students, all standing. The teacher is holding a wooden board in his left hand, and with his right he is writing something on it. The students are standing quite attentively. The one immediately behind the teacher has placed his left hand on the shoulder of the latter. The scene throws ample light on education because of its details. The following conclusions may be drawn from it:

1. The teacher to students ratio seems to have been much smaller and even in the largest class the number of the students did not probably exceed a dozen. (This scene has the largest number of students among all the school scenes depicted at Khajuraho.)

2. The wooden board was used by the teachers for the purposes of illustration, and the writing was done on it with a chalk-like substance.

3. The fact that a student has put his hand on the shoulder of the teacher, who shows no objection to this, proves that the students behaved quite informally with the teacher and treated him just like a father, which is the ideal relationship between the teacher and the taught. In ancient India it was customary that 'the pupil should look up to his preceptor as his father.'[1] It is also possible that the student is trying to draw the attention of the teacher to some thing.

4. The teacher used to hold classes at his own residence. The present class is probably meeting before the hermitage of the teacher in the open air. This was the usual practice in ancient India The *Mahābhārata* refers to several hermitages where students from far off regions gathered round some renowned teacher for instruction.[2] The rule of living in the hermitage of the *āchārya* was not devoid of merit. Living elsewhere, it is quite possible that 'the boy may come in contact with environment and surroundings which would not be conducive to his free and healthy moral and mental development.'[3]

Another scene[4] in the same temple probably depicts an adult school. The teacher is sitting in the centre, flanked by two adults, all sitting on cushioned seats. The students are taking some dictation on the wooden boards (*takhtīs*) held in their left hands. Two attendants are also seen standing on either side.

In the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temple a small frieze[5] again represents coaching of an adult. Both the teacher and the taught are shown sitting down. The latter holds a *takhtī* in his hands and is reading from it. From the ornaments and dress, the student appears to be a very rich man. The scene is probably representative of private tuition.

[1] 'The pupil must secure the affection of his teacher for the sake of his own welfare both here and hereafter' (*Patañjali*, quoted in R K Mookerjee, *Ancient Indian Education*, 1947, p 101). Hindu thinkers regarded the teacher as a spiritual father of the student (*Manu*, 2, 170, *Gautama*, 1 10)

[2] R K Mookerjee, op cit., p. 333.

[3] P N. Prabhu, *Hindu Social Organization* (1958), p. 117.

[4] Lak, S E sub shrine

[5] Kand., *Prad.* back in.

The teachers were learned and pious Brahmins who received donations of land, grain, money, and cows from the State.[1] According to some medieval epigraphs lands were donated for the maintenance of grammar halls and the upkeep of students and teachers.[2]

The general trend of education and learning in India from c. 500 to 1200 A.D., shows that higher education was monopolised by a limited number of persons and that it ceased to be popular among the masses.[3] It is difficult to say as to how far the above state of affairs applied to the Chandella regime. Regarding the general literacy during these times we cannot say anything definite. But, do not the numerous mason's marks on the temple walls of Khajuraho and the number of inscriptions written in the Sanskrit language and early Devanāgarī script, tell anything about the literacy of the people? The women also did not lag behind in receiving education. There are several sculptures which show a lady either writing (Photo 57)[4] or reading (Photo 58)[5] a letter. In a society where even the women received education, the general standard of literacy must have been fairly high.

The art of writing in the Chandella period does not suffer from archaic characteristics. The letters are uniform, well drawn, and beautiful to look at. The writing was done on the stone slabs, copper plates and *bhojapatras*.[6] The scribes of the inscriptions were learned persons. The Stone Inscription of Dhangadeva of the year V.S. 1059 (A D. 1002) was inscribed by one Simgha (*Siṁgheneyaṁ samutkīrṇā*), who was versed in the knowledge of letters and was a virtuous man.[7] For writing on paper or *bhojapatra*, pens were used.[8] On a wooden *takhtī* the writing was done probably with a chalk stick or some chalk-like substance. The first lessons on writing the script must have been taught on these very *takhtīs*. This practice survives even today.

There are epigraphical evidences to show that from c. 10th century A.D. some of the temples of India, particularly those belonging to the South, served as the seats of advanced education in *Veda*, *Vedānta*, *Mīmāṁsā*, *Sāhitya*, *Dharmasūtras*, *Vyākarana*, *Purāna*, and so on.[9] The available epigraphical material, however, does not refer to any such institution in Northern India. But this is not sufficient to prove that in North India, the temples (which were so numerous)

[1] *E I.*, Vol I, p 139, Vss 53-54

[2] R K. Mookerjee, *Local Government in Ancient India*, pp 274-75

[3] A S Altekar, op cit, p 242

[4] Vam, back rt out, Kand, rt out, Par, lt out and *Prad* rt in, Jav, rt out, Ibid, lt out, Viswa, *Mahaman* rt in; K M Munshi, *Saga of Indian Sculpture*, pl 162

[5] Vam, *Mahaman* rt in, Chatur, lt out, Kand, lt out

[6] On the door-frame of the cella of the Chitragupta temple a man is writing on the *bhojapatra*, with a pen-like object

[7] *E I*, Vol I, p 147, Vs 62, L 32

[8] Kand, rt out, Par, ft lt out and *Prad* rt in, Vam, back rt out, K. M Munshi, op. cit, pl. 162

[9] *E I.*, Vol IV, pp 60, 355; *I A*, Vol X, pp 130-31, *South Ind Epigraphy Rep*, 1917, pp 122-24; Ibid., 1913, pp 109-110; see also R. K Mookerjee, op cit, pp 368-70

had nothing to do with education[1] in the middle ages. It is quite possible that some of the bigger temples of Khajuraho, such as, the Kaṇḍariyā, Lakshmaṇa and Viśwanātha temples, with their spacious *mahāmaṇḍapas*, might have served as the centres of higher education.

Muslim invasion and domination over large parts of India, however, brought about disastrous results in the Hindu system of education and learning. 'Hindu Sciences,' says Alberuni, 'have retired far away from those parts of the country that have been conquered by us, and have fled to places, which our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Banaras, and other places.'[2] The broken and defaced sculptures of the Khajuraho temples bear testimony to the fact that Khajuraho also suffered from the fanatical and vandalic activities of the Muslims, and which must have driven the Hindu system of education and learning to the places where the Muslims had no access.

[1] Cf A S Altekar, op cit, pp. 139-40 In the words of Altekar, 'A very large number of North Indian temples have been destroyed along with their documents of antiquity during the Muslim invasions and rule If all the documents conveying extensive properties to most of the rich temples in North India are recovered, it would be almost certainly found that a considerable portion of the temple property was originally intended for educational purposes In North India also, the important temples were centres of education throughout the middle ages' (Ibid.).

[2] Sachau, Vol. I, p 22

Chapter 13

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS AND BELIEFS

TEMPLES are the earthly abodes of the gods. They enshrine a deity whom the people worship at large. The architecture of these edifices is, therefore, adapted to meet the requirements of rituals and practices of the devotees. The gods and goddesses, as conceived by the people, are sculptured on the temple walls and in the niches and are installed in the cella. The temples of Khajuraho, dedicated to different gods and goddesses and containing innumerable icons, present a faithful and authentic picture of the religious conditions and beliefs of those times

The population of the Chandella society appears to have included the followers of all the three major religious currents of India then in vogue, namely, Brahmanism, Jainism and Buddhism. Brahmanism was undoubtedly the dominating religion, with the largest number of devotees, as would appear from the number of dedications of the temples to various Brahmanical deities and their frequent references in the Chandella epigraphs. Jainism was also popular and attracted a large number of the followers. A number of temples, most of which are now destroyed, were dedicated to the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras also. Buddhism, of course, had considerably declined in this area and was in a dwindling state. A solitary image of the Buddha, now in the Khajuraho Museum (Photo 59), is the only archaeological evidence of the existence of Buddhism at Khajuraho.

BRAHMANICAL RELIGIONS

All the five major Brahmanical religions of the times are represented at Khajuraho. The existing temples were originally dedicated to Śiva, Vishṇu and his incarnations, Sūrya and

Devī; but the discovery of an image of Gaṇeśa (Photo 70) and his temple near Chausaṭha Yoginī temple by Cunningham[1] shows that there was at least one Gaṇapati shrine, if not more, on this site. It is significant that a comparatively minor deity like Hanumāna also claimed its devotees in this period at Khajuraho. A large image of Hanumāna, found half way between Brahmanical and Jaina groups of temples, appears to have been originally enshrined in a temple. It bears on its pedestal a short dedicatory inscription dated 316 of the Harsha era (A.D. 922),[2] thus being the oldest inscription at the place. Another more or less similar statue of Hanumāna is found on the banks of Khajuraho Sāgara or Ninorā Tāla, to the north of the Brahmā temple. Both the statues are still worshipped by the local people. Hanumāna is a Vaishṇavite deity and long before the advent of the Chandellas had come to be associated with the worship of Vishṇu, in the form of his incarnation as Rāma. His worship appears to have been especially popular among the common people in the Chandella territory. It must be because of this, as well as the fact that Hanumāna is generally regarded as the god of strength and valour, that the Chandellas not only patronised his worship but also gave a place of honour to him on their coins[3] No independent temple at Khajuraho was dedicated to Kārttikeya or Brahmā[4] or any other minor deity of the Brahmanical pantheon.

WORSHIP OF ŚIVA AND ŚAKTI

Śiva, of course, claimed the largest number of devotees. Bundelkhand was a stronghold of Śaivism during the rule of the Chandella kings. Most of the Chandella rulers themselves were the devout worshippers of Śiva.[5] The majority of the temples at Khajuraho, including the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva, Viśwanātha, Mātangeśvara, Lālaguān, and the so-called Brahmā and Dūlādeva temples, are Śaiva sanctuaries.[6] The first named is the largest and the most beautiful temple at Khajuraho. Following the chronology of these temples, it would appear that Śiva was worshipped with great vigour right from the ascendency to the fall of Khajuraho. The Lālaguān and Brahmā temples mark the beginnings, the Viśwanātha and the Kaṇḍariyā, the peak period, and Dūlādeva, the phase of decline.

Śiva was generally worshipped aniconically in the form of the *liṅgam*, as was the practice even during the earlier and later phases of the history of Śaivism.

[1] *A S R*, Vol II, pp 418-19

[2] *I.A*, Vol XXXVII, pp 131-32

[3] Cf S K Mitra, op cit, p 193

[4] The temple known as the Brahmā temple at Khajuraho is not dedicated to god Brahmā but enshrines a *Chaturmukha Śiva-linga* which the local people mistook for Brahmā, and consequently the temple became known as the Brahmā temple

[5] Devavarman (*I A*, Vol XVI, pp 205ff), Madanavarman (Ibid, pp 202, 207-10), Parmardideva (*E.I*, Vol. IV, pp. 135ff) and Trailokyavarman (*E I*, Vol XVI, pp 272-77) even styled them as *Paramamāheśvaras* in their official records

[6] The temple of Nīlakaṇṭha Mahādeva near Jatkari village, which is now a mass of ruins, was also a Śiva temple enshrining a *Śiva-liṅga*

Mukha-liṅgas, with four human faces facing the cardinal points, have been enshrined in the Brahmā and a subsidiary shrine of the Viśwanātha, but in all other Śaiva temples, the cella is occupied by a plain *Siva-linga*, placed on a high moulded pedestal. *Mukha-lingas*, which were a feature of the Gupta and post-Gupta period, continued to be worshipped in the early stages at Khajuraho, but later appear to have been supplanted by plain *Siva-liṅgas*.[1] Even in the thin friezes where a *Siva-linga* is depicted as being worshipped by the devotees (Photo 60),[2] it is plain and similar to those installed in the cella. The *Siva-linga* of the Mātangeśvara temple, which is still under active worship, deserves special mention. Ill-fitting its modest shrine, it is colossal in dimensions, 3′ 8″ in diameter and 8′ 4″ in height, placed on a large *Gaurīpaṭṭa* (20′ 4″ in diameter and 4′ 5″ in height) occupying the entire floor of the inner sanctum, and is highly polished.[3] It may perhaps be regarded as an indication, howsoever feeble, of the religious enthusiasm of the people who dedicated the temple and worshipped there.

Although there is no evidence of Śiva being worshipped in human form, numerous anthropomorphic representations of the god were sculptured and disposed on the triple bands and in the niches on the temple walls. Usually he is represented as standing with four arms carrying different attributes, such as, the *varada*, trident, serpent and water vessel. He is also represented frequently in the company of his consort (Photo 61). Some images of Śiva in Khajuraho temples are iconographically very interesting On the *bhadra*-niches of the sanctum of the Kaṇḍariyā and the Dūlādeva, Andhakāntaka,[4] Naṭarāja[5] and Tripurāntaka[6] forms of Śiva are sculptured. Kalyāṇasundara Mūrti of Śiva has been carved on the body of the great Varāha. Some interesting images of Śiva are found on the facades of the Chaturbhuja temple. A beautiful sculpture representing Śiva-Pārvatī-*pariṇaya* is a proud possession of the Khajuraho Museum (Photo 62)

Nandī, ever associated with Śiva as his *vāhana*, also obtained the veneration of Śaivite devotees along with his Master He has been represented both independently and in the company of Śiva. Generally, there used to be a Nandī-*maṇḍapa* before every Śaiva temple In front of the Viśwanātha, a huge Nandī with lustrous polish and well decorated with ornaments, is accommodated inside the *maṇḍapa* facing the main temple (Photo 63) Before the Lālaguān temple, Nandī is seated under the open sky without any shed It is surprising that there is no Nandī in front of the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva and Dūlādeva temples. Possibly, like subsidiary shrines of most of the temples at Khajuraho, Nandī-*maṇḍapas* also were destroyed, leaving no trace of their existence

[1] Mātangeśvara, Kaṇḍariyā, Viswanātha, Nīlakaṇṭha, etc, had enshrined plain *Śiva-lingas*

[2] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel, Cf *K S*, illustration on p 23

[3] Late Prof J N Banerjea kindly informed the author that somewhat similarly large *Śiva-lingas* are still popularly worshipped in several temples of South India

[4] Kand, rt out, Dula, rt out, Viswa, rt out

[5] Kand, back out, Dula, back out, Viswa, back out

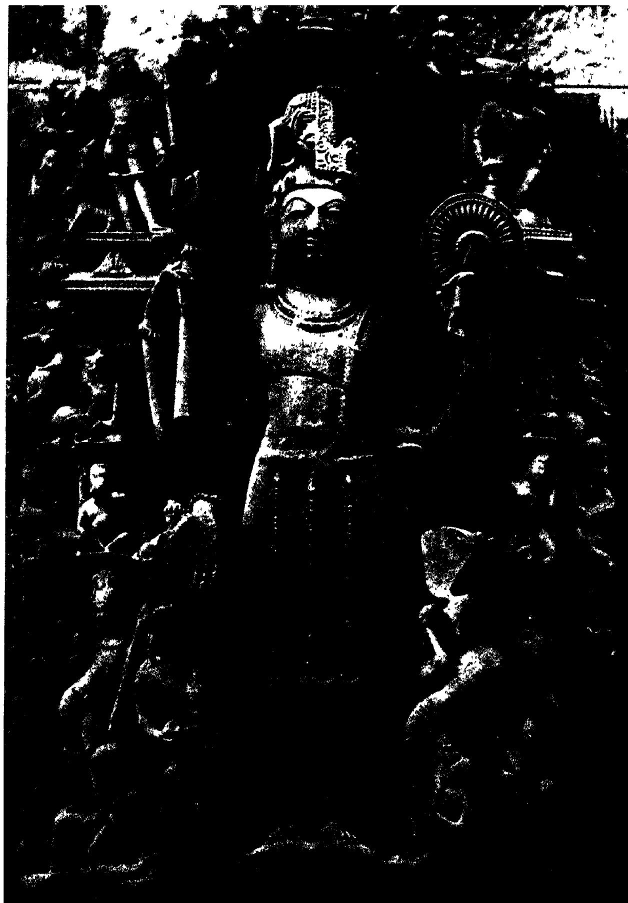
[6] Kand, lt out, Dula, lt out

70 Dancing Image of Ganapati, Khajuraho Museum



[illegible]

[illegible]







[illegible] A Couple, Chhatarpur Palace

[illegible] Neminātha, Chhatarpur Palace

The cult of Śakti at Khajuraho may be taken to have been almost as popular as that of Śiva. The worship of mother-goddesses is very old in India, as old, if not older, than that of any other god. Several centuries before the advent of the Chandellas it had not only been very much developed but even an independent sect of the Śāktas had come into existence. The principal idea behind the worship of Śakti, which to a certain extent is foreshadowed in the earliest literature of India, but which was systematized only in the *Purānas* and the *Tantras*, was the belief in a Divine Energy or Śakti pervading the entire universe and activating it. In its more popular form, however, it consisted of the worship of Śakti in her various forms. These forms at one time had been independent goddesses of various origins and different natures; some of Vedic origin and others of non-Vedic, some of primitive superstitious background, others of more cultured ones, some local deities, others merely tutelary. As the cult advanced, some goddesses became more prominent than others, and by a characteristic process of identification, so familiar in the religious history of India, tended to absorb the minor ones. Thus, although the many goddesses continued to be worshipped in different localities by different peoples, a process of unification was set up which, with development of the concept of Śakti, culminated into a Supreme Goddess with many names and forms. The male gods were conceived as inactive and transcendent by themselves and it were their female counterparts—their 'energies' —that were active and immanent. It is through them that the gods act; without them, they are lifeless. The two were conceived as inseparably connected to each other, as if in eternal embrace, and the whole universe was conceived as the product of their union. Theoretically, therefore, the Śākta ideology was a kind of Advaitism. In its practical aspect, however, the Śākta cult, or more accurately, some forms of it, developed peculiar characteristics. While the common mass of lay-devotees probably worshipped the various forms of the goddess in innocent ways like the worship of many of the Brahmanical gods, or in accordance with local traditions associated with that particular deity, some forms of the Śāktas enjoined such unsocial practices as drinking wine and sexual indulgence and even attached religious significance to them. True, very often such practices were interpreted symbolically, but it is also undeniable that they were sometimes followed literally.

Among the various mother-goddesses, the most prominent was the one who from very early history came to be associated with Śiva as his consort. But although the worship of this goddess always remained closely allied to that of Śiva, it never completely merged with the latter. As her popularity grew, the goddess, who was originally known by such names as Umā, Pārvatī, etc., came to acquire many more new names and absorb many kindred goddesses, all of whom became her different forms. By the medieval period, these forms had considerably swelled in number, but it is still possible to classify them at least into three prominent aspects[1]: her ordinary 'bland' form in which the goddess

[1] Cf R G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems* (Collected Works, Vol IV), 1929, p 206

was worshipped through simple rites and ceremonies; her fierce form in which was manifested the character of many of the goddesses with a primitive background and in which form animal and probably human beings were sacrificed to her; and lastly her sensual form in which the goddess was conceived as possessed of eternal youth and unsurpassing beauty.

There are indications of the prevalence of all the three forms of Devī at Khajuraho. Although there are innumerable representations of the goddess in the form of Pārvatī along with her consort at Khajuraho, the image of *Godhāsanā*-Gaurī has been enshrined in a modest subsidiary shrine.[1] The cult of the seven divine mothers also appears to have been popular and we notice them at prominent places around the Viśwanātha and Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temples.[2] Their worship is quite old but their names and forms often varied. At Khajuraho, they also include the goddess in one of her fierce forms as Chāmuṇḍā. The best evidence of the cult of the mother-goddess, particularly in her fierce aspect, is Chausaṭha Yoginī temple at Khajuraho. In this form the goddess was worshipped as Kālī (the black one, or the destroyer) accompanied by sixty-four female goblins. The worship of this form of the goddess appears to have been particularly popular in the Central Indian region during the medieval period,[3] as several other temples of the type are known in this area.[4] At Khajuraho there are several prominent representations of Mahishāsuramardinī Durgā and Bhairavī,[5] which are also fierce forms of the goddess. There appears to be ample evidences of the prevalence of the sensual form of Śakti worship in the sculptures of Khajuraho. Besides the accent on the representation of voluptuous Surasundarīs, a common practice of the sculptors was to portray the gods in the company of their consorts. Not only is there a profuse depiction of Śiva in the embrace of Pārvatī on the temple walls, and of Vishṇu with Lakshmī, but practically all male gods are provided with a consort. We notice such pairs as Indra and Śachī, Brahmā and Sāvitrī, Kāma and Rati, Gaṇeśa and Vighneśvarī (Photo 64), Rāma and Sītā (Photo 65), Balarāma and Revatī, and Paraśurāma and his consort.[6] Both these facts point to the influence of the Śākta idealogy and practice But perhaps the most glaring instance of it is seen in the erotic sculptures. It is highly likely that besides other factors most of them are also inspired by the sensual aspect of Śakti worship.[7]

[1] Pārvatī temple near Viswa Although the Pārvatī temple, on the basis of the figure of Vishṇu on the *lalāṭa-bimba* appears to have been originally a Vaishṇava shrine, the dimensions and other features of the image of Gaurī show that it was also meant to be enshrined in the cella, which unfortunately is not traceable now. The goddess stands in the *Samapādasthānaka* pose with a creeping *godhā* (iguana) carved on the pedestal.

[2] The seven divine mothers represented are: Chāmuṇḍā, Indrāṇī, Vārāhī, Vaishṇavī, Kaumārī, Māheśvarī and Brahmāṇī Among the three surviving sculptures of the Chausaṭha Yoginī temple, two are the representations of Māheśvarī and Brahmāṇī, while the third one is that of Mahishāsuramardinī.

[3] *The Struggle for Empire*, p. 575.

[4] Supra., p. 11, footnote 4

[5] Cf. *A.I.*, No 15, pp 60-61.

[6] Ibid., No 15, p 61

[7] Infra., pp. 167-170.

WORSHIP OF VISHNU AND HIS INCARNATIONS

Next in popularity to Śiva, but closely following him, was the god Vishṇu whose worship also had a recognised place, and some of the most beautiful temples were dedicated to him. Some of the early kings of the Chandella family, including Yaśovarman, were worshippers of this deity and constructed temples in his honour.[1] The extant temples at Khajuraho dedicated to Vishṇu and his different forms are Lakshmaṇa, Varāha, Vāmana, Javārī and Chaturbhuja. From the figures on the *lalāṭa-bimba*, the Devī Jagadambe as also the ruined temple now known as Kakrā Maṛh, appear to have been originally dedicated to Vaishṇava deities.

Vishṇu was generally worshipped in his traditional form with such attributes as the *abhaya*, water-vessel, *śankha, chakra, gadā, padma*, etc.[2] Several images of *Anantaśāyī* Vishṇu[3] and an interesting one of the god in his *Maunavratin* form (Photo 66),[4] all of which probably occupied positions of importance in *bhadra*-niches are preserved in the Khajuraho Museum. The image of Vishṇu installed in the cella of the Chaturbhuja temple is very impressive (7′ 5″ in height) and iconographically highly interesting. Besides, the god appears to have been conceived in several other forms also.

An integral aspect of the Vaishṇava religion was the worship of the god Vishṇu in the form of his various incarnations. The ten incarnations are seen in the sculptures of Khajuraho. They are invariably depicted in a traditional form on the frame of the enshrined image. Not all of them, however, were equally popular. The most important ones appear to have been Vāmana and Varāha who claimed independent worship and temples were dedicated to them. At least two or three images of the former, now preserved in the Khajuraho Museum, also appear from their size to have occupied the cella of some temples. Both these forms, along with Narasimha, are also disposed in prominent positions in *bhadra*-niches on the outer walls of the sanctum proper, obviously for worship during perambulation. Rāma, Balarāma and Paraśurāma take a place in the triple bands outside along with various gods and goddesses and Surasundarīs. There are representations of Kūrma and Kachchhapa forms also, but once they occupied a more conspicuous position inside the covered *pradakshināpatha* of the Lakshmaṇa temple where two figures of *Yogāsana*-Vishṇu represent the fish and tortoise incarnations indicated by the miniature representations of these animals. Some of the Purāṇic mythological stories connected with the incarnations of Vishṇu also appear to have been very popular with the worshippers of this god

[1] Cf *E.I.*, Vol. I, pp 123-35. Kīrttivarman also appears to have had leanings towards Vaishṇavism, since in the Deogarh Rock Inscription he is likened to Vishṇu (*I.A.*, Vol. VIII, p. 238) and in the Mahoba Inscription, he is similarly compared to *Purushottama* (*E I*, Vol. I, p. 219). Krishṇa Miśra wrote his allegorical drama *Prabodhachandrodaya* during the reign of this king. He refers to the temples of Vishṇu and glorifies *Vishṇubhakti* (Faith in Vishṇu), an important character in his play.

[2] Lak., rt. out; Vishṇu in the cella ft. lt. sub. shrine Lak; Vam., lt. out; Ibid, ft. rt out

[3] Cf. Khajuraho Museum, Nos. 55 and 556.

[4] Khajuraho Museum (number could not be traced)

in the Bundelkhand region. There are a number of scenes delineating Krishṇa-*līlā*. They are found mainly in the uppermost row of the *janghā* of the sanctum proper in the Lakshmaṇa temple. The scenes include subjugation of Kuvalayāpīḍa, *Sakaṭa bhanga*, *Arishṭāsura-vadha*, *Yamalārjuna*, *Vatsāsura-Vadha*, *Triṇāvarta-Vadha*, *Kāliya-damana*, *Pūtanā-Vadha*, acceptance of sacred paste from Kubjā, duel with Chāṇūra and Śala, and the killing of Sūta Lomaharshaṇa by Balarāma.[1] A few Krishṇa-*līlā* scenes are found in the sculptures utilised in the repairs of the Jaina temples (Photo 69).

Special mention should be made of a rare Vishṇu image with four arms and three heads (man-lion, human and *varāha*) enshrined in the Lakshmaṇa temple and an eleven-headed Vishṇu in a *bhadra*-niche of the Chitragupta temple where the god has been shown in a composite form with his incarnations.[2] Such icons may have been special objects of worship of a certain class of Vishṇu worshippers.

WORSHIP OF MINOR DEITIES

Among the minor gods, Sūrya (the Sun-god) appears to have been quite popular and the Chitragupta temple was dedicated to him. The enshrined image of the standing Sūrya in the cella wears high boots and drives in a chariot of seven horses. The seated image of Sūrya in his chariot drawn similarly by seven horses is found on the *jagatī* of the Chitragupta and the outer wall of the Chaturbhuja temples. Sūrya sculptures are also found on the upper lintels of the doorways of the temples and in the Khajuraho Museum.[3] Revanta, the son of Sūrya, has been represented on the *jagatī*-frieze of the Lakshmaṇa temple.

Navagrahas were also held in high esteem. They are represented both in Brahmanical and Jaina temples, surmounting the upper lintel of the sanctum-doorway. Many detached Navagraha-panels may also be seen in the Khajuraho Museum.

The large dancing image of Gaṇeśa (Photo 70) mentioned earlier appears to have been originally enshrined in a temple.[4] There is no other evidence of an independent Gaṇapati shrine at Khajuraho, but images of Gaṇeśa are found in large numbers in the Śaiva and Vaishṇava temples. He was regarded as a god who wards off evil and brings good fortune. This god must have been quite popular and commanded much respect for even his mount—the *mūshaka*—has been represented independently.[5] It has already been noticed above that no temple at Khajuraho was dedicated to Kārttikeya. The few representations of him are only

[1] *A I*, No 15, p 62, see also Krishṇa-*līlā* scenes depicted in a panel preserved in the Khajuraho Museum, No 1350

[2] Chitra, rt out, lower *bhadra*-niche of the sanctum proper

[3] Khajuraho Museum, Nos 1259 and 1267.

[4] This is indicated not only by the impressive size of the image (6′ high) but also the testimony of Cunningham who discovered it in the ruins of a small shrine (*A S R*, Vol II, pp. 418-19).

[5] *H.T.*, Vol II, pl XXXVI. 'Mūṣaka rests paw and face on a heap of Laddū, ball shaped sweets, in a bowl, the mouse watches over the sweets, which pleases its invisible rider'

on the temple walls along with other minor gods and goddesses. It is clear that while he was remembered as a member of the Śiva family, at least in this area he did not command independent worship.

The fate of Brahmā appears to be somewhat similar to that of Kārttikeya. There are, however, comparatively a larger number of representations of this god on the walls, both of the Vaishṇava and the Śaiva temples, and sometimes even those of the Jaina. Although Brahmā lost ground to the more popular deities like Vishṇu and Śiva long before the age of the Chandellas, he was still present in the minds of the people as the Father God—the god of creation—and worthy of reverence and devotion.

Dikpālas (the guardians of the quarters) were given a definite place on the facades of the temples, appearing usually in pairs at the four corners. Their order of disposition is: Indra and Agni in the south-east, Yama and Nirṛiti in the south-west, Varuṇa and Vāyu in the north-west, and Kubera and Iśāna in the north-east. Usually they are four-armed but sometimes they have only two hands. Except for Kubera, they are all represented with their respective mounts.[1]

Among the minor deities may also be mentioned Saraswatī, the goddess of wisdom, who was also venerated by the people and her representations are found on the temple walls. She was sometimes depicted as eight-handed, with different attributes including a *vīṇā*, and with her mount swan.[2] River goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā continued to be depicted in a traditional style on the door jambs of the Brahmanical temples, standing on their respective mounts, Makara and Kūrma.

JAINISM

An appreciable number of persons in the Chandella regime appears to have had their faith in Jainism to which the Jaina temples, some of them among the finest temples of Khajuraho, bear testimony. From personal names and appellations inscribed on some Jaina images of Khajuraho, it appears that the worship of the Tīrthaṅkaras was more popular with the *Sreshṭhin* class, the members of which patronised this religion by making munificent donations.[3] The number of Jaina temples at Khajuraho during the Chandella period must have been far more than that at present. This is indicated by numerous large images of the Tīrthaṅkaras stored in the courtyard of the Jaina temples and the many similar ones in the Khajuraho Museum. Among the extant temples, only two, Pārśvanātha and Ādinātha, have retained their original shape. Jaina sculptures have also been largely used in the construction of modern shrines of the Tīrthaṅkaras.

Among the different Tīrthaṅkaras, Ādinātha, the first Tīrthaṅkara, was given

[1] *A.I.*, No. 15, p. 61.
[2] Cf. Khajuraho Museum, No. 824.
[3] Cf. *E.I.*, Vol. I, p. 153; Ibid., pp 135-36. Even in modern times Jainism survives mainly among the trading class.

a higher status and in most of the temples it was he who occupied the sanctum proper. Besides Ādinātha, the so called Pārśvanātha temple[1] also was originally dedicated to this Tīrthaṅkara. A gigantic image of Ādinātha (14′ high) is enshrined in a modern structure known as the Śāntinātha temple. The unusually large size of this image may have been an attempt to suggest the mythical proportions of this Tīrthaṅkara in the Jaina scriptures. There are also a number of images of Ādinātha in the museum and the temple courtyard, some of them being masterpieces of medieval Indian sculptural art (Cf. Photo 71).[2] All the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras were sometimes represented on one slab. At times, two Tīrthaṅkaras—Ādinātha and Mahāvīra—were sculptured as a pair and worshipped. The Tīrthaṅkaras and the principal Jaina goddesses were disposed on the outer walls of the temples along with the gods and goddesses of the Brahmanical pantheon. The Jaina goddess Chakreśvarī appears to have enjoyed a special status; her eight-armed figure, riding on Garuḍa, was depicted on the *lalāṭa-bimba* of the sanctum-doorway of the Jaina shrines.

Khajuraho appears to have been primarily a seat of the Digambara Jaina monks. Not only are all the images of the Tīrthaṅkaras depicted nude but this is also suggested by representation of the sixteen dreams of the mother of Mahāvīra on the architraves above the sanctum-doorways which follow the Digambara tradition.[3]

BUDDHISM

Khajuraho was a small centre of Buddhist religion when Hiuen Tsang visited it in the seventh century A.D. and noticed some monasteries here.[4] But soon after, Buddhism appears to have lost ground in this region. There are no remains of a Buddhist monastery or temple at Khajuraho of the Chandella period or even of some time earlier. Again, no Chandella king is known to have been a Buddhist or to have constructed a Buddhist shrine. Undoubtedly languishing, the religion of the Buddha was however not altogether absent in this area even during the period under study. The solitary image of the Buddha (Photo 59) discovered at Khajuraho has already been noticed. It points to adherents of this religion, howsoever few in number. The testimony of Krishṇa Miśhra, though not flattering, nevertheless suggests the existence of some Buddhists in this region. A few

[1] It is a much later name given to the temple when the image of Pārśvanātha was enshrined in the cella. But the figure of a bull—the cognizance of Ādinātha—on the original pedestal leaves no doubt that the cella enshrined the first Tīrthaṅkara. It may be mentioned here that although the Ādinātha temple from the very beginning was dedicated to this Tīrthaṅkara, his present image in the cella was installed only a century ago.

[2] See Appendix I, 15

[3] The auspicious symbols of the dream represented on the Ādinātha and Ghaṇṭāī temples are · Airāvata, the noblest bull, the noblest lion, Śrī-devī, a pair of garlands, the moon, the rising sun, a pair of full vases, a pair of fish, a lake, an agitated sea, a lion-throne, the celestial car, *Nāgendra-bhavana*, a heap of jewels, and smokeless fire (Cf. *Ādipurāṇa*, 12/101-19).

[4] Watters, Vol. II, p. 251; see also Supra, pp. 2-3. Cunningham suggested that numerous mounds scattered to the north and east of the Khajuraho village are most probably the remains of some of these monasteries (*A.S.R.*, Vol II, p. 416).

notable Buddhist sculptures have also been discovered at the near-by site of Mahoba.[1] This was, however, only the last glow of the dying influence of Buddhism in this region.

MODE OF WORSHIP

Only some general features of the mode of worship can be gathered from the sculptures and architecture of the temples at Khajuraho. It is quite evident that circumambulation of the temple and the deity formed an important part of the ritual of worship. Usually, the high *jagatī* on which the temple stood served the purpose of a *pradakshināpatha*, but in the larger temples an inner ambulatory was also added for a closer circumambulation of the main cella. While going round the temple from outside, the worshippers must have paid their veneration to the deities on the outer walls, particularly to those disposed in the lower *bhadra*-niches which included various gods and goddesses not necessarily associated with the enshrined deity.

The spacious *mahāmaṇḍapas* in some of the temples indicate that the worshippers congregated here and went one by one to make their offerings to the deity. These *maṇḍapas* may also have served the purpose of dancing halls for the *devadāsīs* who were associated with the temples.[2] In respect of architecture from the ritualistic point of view, Brahmanical and Jaina temples are comparable with each other.

There are very few sculptures in Khajuraho depicting actual *pūjā* scenes.[3] Some represent the worship of the *Siva-liṅga* and others of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras, and these must undoubtedly have been inspired by the actual practice of the times. In the Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel (Photo 60), the worshippers have come with such objects in their hands as pots full of water, bell, incense-burner, flower-basket and garland of flowers. Two of the worshippers are seen placing the garland on the *Siva-liṅga* and pouring water on it from a pot. Others are standing on either side with folded hands, probably waiting for their turn to approach the deity. Four persons on the left are beating small drums, gongs and sounding the *saṅkha*, while a danseuse accompanied by musicians is dancing on the right. The worship of the Tīrthaṅkaras too was accompanied by the blowing of conch-shells, etc., and they also were similarly offered water from the pots. From the references of the *Ādipurāna*—a medieval Jaina work—the offering of flowers, *akshata*, *dhūpa*, *dīpa*, *naivedya*, etc., appears to have been customary in case of the Tīrthaṅkaras.[4]

Singing devotional songs, singly or in groups, in praise of the god appears to have been another aspect of the religious practices of the people. A scene in

[1] *A S M.*, No. 8 ('Six Sculptures from Mahoba' by K N Dikshit).

[2] Cf. Kālañjar Pillar Inscription (V.S. 1186) of the time of Madanavarman, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, p. 34, see also Supra., p. 68 for details.

[3] Sibsāgara *pūjā* panel; Kand., *Prad.* lt. in; Śāntinātha, rt. in; Ibid., *Man.* to lt. of cella; mod. structure to the rt. of Par.; *K.S.*, illustration on p. 23.

[4] *Ādipurāṇa*, pt. II, 40/6-9; Ibid., 40/80.

the Lakshmaṇa temple, often described as a *Kīrtana* scene, represents a couple in a dancing pose, the man with his face calm and ecstatic playing castanets and his smiling partner playing the cymbals.[1] Such group-singing and dancing may have taken place in the *maṇḍapas* in front of the deity.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

A very important feature of the religious life of Khajuraho was the mutual tolerance amongst the followers of different faiths. The presence of Śaiva sculptures in the Vaishṇava temples and *vice versa* shows a feeling of religious amity and the desire of the adherents of the two faiths to come closer to each other. Even in the Jaina temples the gods and goddesses of the Brahmanical pantheon have been freely depicted and given prominent positions on the outer walls. Religious tolerance among the followers of different Brahmanical gods is further proved by the presence of a number of images combining the features of more than one god. The images of Hari-Hara (Photo 72),[2] Hari-Hara-Pitāmaha,[3] Hari-Hara-Hiraṇyagarbha,[4] Sadāśiva,[5] and Ardhanārīśvara[6] are the principal composite icons of Khajuraho.

The architectural similarity of the temples of the different gods also testifies that they were built in an age of extreme toleration, and to recall Fergusson's words once more, 'when any rivalry that existed must only have been among the architects in trying who could produce the most beautiful and most exquisitely adorned building.'[7] Much of the credit of the catholic views of the common people should go to the Chandella kings who fostered this feeling of amity by their tolerant religious policy.[8] Irrespective of their personal faith, they not only looked with an equal eye on different Brahmanical faiths, but also took care to safeguard the privileges of the heterodox religions.

A few sculptures on the Brahmanical temples depicted to ridicule the Jaina monks[9] should be regarded more as exceptions than the general rule. The picture of religious life painted by Krishṇa Miśra in the *Prabodhachandrodaya*, which is full of hatred and contempt for the Buddhists and Jainas, is also not reliable, since he was a staunch Vaisṇavite and his vision is coloured by his fanatic zeal. The spirit of religious tolerance of the Chandella kings and the testimony of Khajuraho temples is contrary to this.

[1] *K.S*, p 122, pl 69
[2] Khajuraho Museum (number could not be traced)
[3] Cf *A I*, No 15, p 61.
[4] Jav, back out, Chitra, back out
[5] Kand, interior niche.
[6] Chatur., lt out, Khajuraho Museum gate, *lalāṭa-bimba*
[7] James Fergusson, *A History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol II, p. 49
[8] Cf. N. S Bose, op cit, pp 161-62, S K. Mitra., op cit., p 185.
[9] I have noticed two such sculptures in the Dūlādeva temple (rt out) where a pervert Jaina monk is shown along with a lady, suggesting his licentious character. L K. Tripathi has also published some sculptures of this nature (*Bhāratī*, No 3, pp. 100ff.).



75



76



75 A Kanda Guru, Lakshmana Temple (Photo O. P. Khanna)

76 Woman-headed Śārdūla, Khajuraho Museum (Photo R. Narayan)

77 Kubera, Khajuraho Museum



78 Lady Exposing Her Nudity, Lakshmana Temple
(Copyright, Department of Archaeology, Government of India)

78



79 Apsarā Supporting Her Breast, Viśvanātha Temple
(Copyright, Department of Archaeology, Government of India)

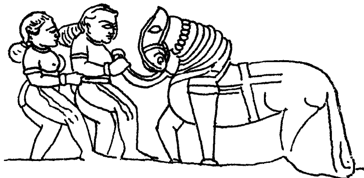
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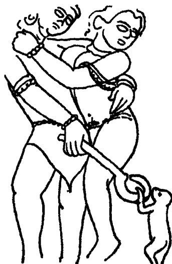
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Plate XXIII
MISCELLANEOUS SCULPTURES

Chapter 14

MISCELLANEOUS SCENES OF EVERYDAY LIFE

IN the preceding chapters various aspects of life, as depicted in the sculptures of Khajuraho, have been described and discussed. A few scenes, however, could not be dealt with in any of the previous chapters, hence they will be treated here separately.

POLITICAL SCENES

The sculptors of Khajuraho did not depict court or palace scenes like the painters of Ajanta, as there was no occasion for doing so. Consequently, scenes depicting a king and his court are very few. We have, however, discovered three scenes in which a king has been depicted in different contexts.

One such scene is found in the Lakshmaṇa temple.[1] It depicts two kings sitting on cushions facing each other. The army of each stands at the backs of the respective kings. It appears that some treaty or some other such political matter is being discussed between the two. Each king is wearing a *dhotī*, *mukuṭa* and rich jewellery.

The second scene is found in the Śāntinātha temple.[2] In this, a man is shown sitting on a cushion with a high slanting back. From his dress, ornaments and majestic way of sitting he appears to be a king. He is attended by a female *chaurī*-bearer and several other persons, two of whom have bows and two, swords and shields. In front of the royal personage a lady is standing with folded hands. From the gesture of the king's fingers it seems that he is saying something. The whole depiction appears to be a court scene. The king, it appears, has listened to the lady and now seems to be making some

[1] Lak., *Man* fz balcony lt in.
[2] Śāntinātha, *Man*. fz in

enquiries. In the limited space of the frieze it was perhaps not possible for other details of the court to be shown.

The third scene, occurring in the Viśwanātha temple,[1] depicts a person of high social status, as is indicated by his dress and ornaments. He appears to be either a king or some person belonging to the royal family. Sitting on a high backed couch, he is receiving a group of merchants who are showing their goods to him. A female attendant is seen standing behind the couch.

In ancient and medieval India the punishments for crime were very severe. One scene at Khajuraho probably depicts the royal punishment in which a man is to be crushed to death by an elephant[2]. The latter has twisted the person to be killed with his trunk. Nearby a horse-rider and an armed man are seen standing. The horse-rider is probably some officer whose duty it is to see that the royal order is executed.

We have already referred to the scenes depicting a king or the military leader riding on horse-back and attended by a *chhatra*-bearer and bodyguards, in the chapter on 'Glimpses of Military Life.'

The sculptures of Khajuraho usually depict the brighter aspects of life, but in two scenes we could recognise persons indulging in heinous crimes. In one scene a man is shown attacking a lady with a dagger,[3] probably with the intention of murdering her. In another, a man is depicted as molesting a woman. He is embracing the lady by force and threatens her with a dagger held in his hand.[4] In a museum piece, the sculptor has depicted a woman defending her chastity; a man has embraced her by force, but she attacks him with a dagger.[5]

DOMESTIC SCENES

There are several scenes which depict a wife pleasing her angry husband or *vice versa*. In the Lakshmaṇa temple[6] a scene depicts a couple. The husband looks angry and cold. The wife has gently placed her hand on his shoulder and tries to please him, but he seems unmoved. A somewhat similar scene appears in the Chitragupta temple also.[7] Sometimes the husband presented flowers to his wife as a token of love. A beautiful scene in the Devī Jagadambe temple depicts a couple, the man holding a flower in his right hand and embracing the lady with the left. The flower is obviously meant to be presented to her (Photo 14).[8] In several sculptures a couple, obviously husband and wife, has been shown sitting and talking. Probably they are discussing some family problems.[9]

[1] Viswa., *Adhis.* fz lt out.
[2] Chitra , fz. lt out.
[3] Khajuraho Museum (number could not be traced)
[4] Dula., back rt. out ; Kand , back rt out.
[5] Khajuraho Museum, No 329.
[6] Lak., rt. out. See also Dula., lt. out.
[7] Chitra , lt. out, middle band.
[8] Ibid., lt. out, upper band ; Viswa., *Man.* balcony.
[9] Devi., back rt. out See also Khajuraho Museum, No. 300.

Some scenes depict very trivial though realistic happenings of family life. They show the power of minute observation on the part of the sculptors. In the Chitragupta temple a scene depicts a couple standing facing each other. The lady has closed her eyes with her hands. It appears that the man is going to show her some unexpected article on the condition that she closes her eyes first.[1] There are many scenes in the temples of Khajuraho which depict a lady with a letter and pen (Photo 57). A scene in the Chaturbhuja temple shows a lady with a letter in the right hand while the palm of the left hand is placed on her temple. It appears that she has just received the letter bearing some unhappy news and consequently has become sad and gloomy.[2]

One sculpture depicts a couple standing, the man holding the reins of the horse standing nearby (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 3).[3] It appears that the scene represents a husband and wife; the husband is going away on a long journey and the wife has come to see him off. Since the man is without any weapon, we cannot associate this scene with military life.

The sculptures, overall, give the impression that the ladies freely mixed with the men and no *purdah* was observed A scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple[4] depicts two ladies talking freely with men, all sitting on cushioned seats. In another scene in the same temple a lady is pouring water for drinking from a spouted vessel in the hand of a man. In one solitary scene in the Pārśvanātha temple[5] a man is depicted as beating a lady with a rod. This probably depicts a family quarrel resulting in this harsh treatment being meted out by the husband.

MOTHER AND CHILD

Many scenes at Khajuraho deal with the theme of mother and child, depicting a woman fondling and caressing her baby. They give a realistic touch of family life. Some sculptures show a lady simply standing and holding the child on her loins.[6] Sometimes she is shown as tempting the child with a bunch of mangoes [7] It appears that rich persons employed maid-servants for looking after the baby. In a scene in the Lakshmaṇa temple a woman is depicted as taking the child from the lap of the servant. She holds some toy in her left hand for the baby.[8] A beautiful sculpture from Khajuraho, now deposited in the Indian Museum, is a fine piece depicting a mother fondling her child (Photo 13).[9]

[1] Chitra, lt out
[2] Chatur, back out
[3] Kand, fz lt out
[4] Lak., *Ardhaman* fz lt in
[5] Par., ft lt out
[6] Viswa, *Prad* rt in, lower band, Kand, rt out, middle band
[7] Kand, rt out, middle band, Vam, lt out, upper band
[8] Lak, rt out, upper band
[9] Indian Museum, No A25230 See also Khajuraho Museum, No 19



80



81

80 *Lady Exposing Her Nudity and* Dampati *Couple (Copyright Department of Archaeology Government of India)*

81 Dampati *Couple Khajuraho Museum*

82 Dampati Couple, *Devi Jagadambe Temple (Copyright, Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*

83 *Vishnu with His Consort, Khajuraho Museum*



82



83

MOUTH HYGIENE

People in ancient and medieval times gave careful attention to mouth hygiene as in the present times. The majority used twigs obtained from various trees as brushes. Tooth powders and pastes must also have been used, as several have been described in ancient Indian books on medicine.[1] Incidentally, in the Khajuraho sculptures a man has been depicted as cleaning his teeth with a twig (*dātūna*).[2]

[1] Cf Suśruta, *Chikitsāsthāna,* XXIV 4, H. P Dwivedi, *Prāchīna Bhārata Ke Kalātmaka Vinoda* (1952), p. 19
[2] Viswa, *Adhis* fr. rt. out.

'The whole universe, from Brahman to the smallest worm, is based on the union of male and female. Why then should we feel ashamed of it, when even Lord Śiva was forced to take four faces on account of his greed to have a look at a maiden?'[1]

Chapter 15

EROTIC SCULPTURES—A STUDY IN BACKGROUND

TODAY most persons, both Indians and foreigners, know Khajuraho only for its erotic sculptures and whenever they happen to visit these monuments, their eyes float on the sculptured reliefs to locate the so-called obscene figures. But I am sure they are utterly disappointed to find such a small number of sculptures which they could term 'obscene.' It is true that such carvings constitute only a small part in the ocean of Khajuraho sculptures; many of them, lying hidden in obscure places, may even be missed by the visitor, unless he aims at laboriously locating each of them. However, the presence of even a single sculpture of the so-called obscene nature on the walls of the 'abodes of gods' will have to be accounted for and the reason for its depiction there will have to be deciphered and sought. To no one else has this problem a greater interest than to a student of social and cultural history. An explanation of the eroticism in art is linked with the entire social and cultural process of a country and hence it may highlight many facets of a society which are otherwise very little known.

Before going back to the background of the

[1] आब्रह्मकीटान्तमिदं निबद्धं पुंस्त्रीप्रयोगेण जगत् समस्तम् ।
व्रीडात्र का यत्र चतुर्मुखत्वमीशोऽपि लोभाद् गमितो युवत्याः ॥

Brihatsamhitā, 74/20

erotic sculptures, let us have an idea of the nature of eroticism in Khajuraho sculptures. In any systematic and thorough analysis, they will fall into certain definite groups, as follows, according to their nature and intentions:

I. Single sculpture of a lady, exposing nudity or betraying erotic suggestions.
II. Simple *dampati* couples.
III. Couples in passionate kisses and embraces.
IV. Couples in sexual congress in the normal or more or less normal way; sometimes accompanied by attendants.
V. Sexual congress in fantastic poses.
VI. Coitus with animals.

In group I the beautiful Apsarās are depicted singly with all sorts of erotic suggestions. They are shown half nude; the bosom, waist and abdomen are not covered by any apparel. The deep navel and the two streaks below it are clearly shown. The lower garment has been worn practically from the upper part of the thighs, so that the external genitalia is half exposed (Photo 78). The Apsarās are very often shown as gently supporting one breast with their palm and lost in beholding its seductive charm with indulgence (Photo 79). Sometimes the ladies are actually shown loosening their lower garments, thereby exposing themselves (Photo 80). Often there is a very subtle erotic suggestion in these single sculptures of the ladies. One in the Lakshmaṇa temple is shown with a number of nail-marks (*nakhakshata*) on the breasts and near the arm-pit.[1] Sometimes a maiden is depicted hiding her face with the hand as if a shy bride were being approached by her husband.[2]

Group II of the sculptures usually consists of simple *dampati* couples standing side by side, and mildly embracing each other (Photos 80 and 81), one hand of each being placed on the shoulder of the other and the other hand of the man clasping that of the lady.[3] But there are variations of this theme. Sometimes the man is shown just offering a flower to the lady (Photo 14).[4] Often the lady holds the arm of the man who is walking away to the left and appears unwilling to stop (Photo 82). The scene probably portrays a wife trying to placate her angry husband.[5] Sometimes the table is turned and the husband is shown similarly pacifying the angry wife who is unwilling to show her favours to him.[6] The majority of the sculptures of this category, however, are those of the gods standing (Photos 83 and 84) or seated (Photo 64) with their consorts.[7]

[1] Lak, *Prad.* lt. in; Ibid, *Prad* back in
[2] Vam., back lt. out; Ibid, lt out; Kand, rt out, Ibid, ft. rt. out.
[3] *K. S*, pl 68; *Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana*, Tr. S. C Upadhyaya (1963), pl. X.
[4] Cf Khajuraho Museum, No. 300.
[5] Chitra, lt. out, middle band; Lak, lt. out
[6] Max-Pol Fouchet, *The Erotic Sculpture of India* (1959), pl. 93.
[7] Ibid., pls 67 and 84.

Group III constitutes the largest number of sculptures and includes some of the best pieces ever carved by Indian artists. The men and women are shown in a passionate embrace, kissing and caressing each other in various attitudes, moods and postures. The emotional fervour and ardent longing of the couples to melt and merge into each other is only natural and enlivens the composition as a genuine piece of art. The expression on the faces of the lovers speaks eloquently of tender love and the eyes, looking as if half-closed, glow with the intensity of desire (Photos 86 and 87). The representation of these amorous couples betrays a variety of posture of embrace and style of kissing. Often the *ālingana* appears to be a preliminary to congress because the man, completely nude, is shown stealthily loosening the lower garment of the lady (Photo 90), or while embracing he caresses various parts of her body (Photos 91 and 107).[1]

Group IV presents a vivid spectacle of carnal delight. Men and women are shown in sexual congress in various postures, standing, sitting and lying down The postures in this group, however, are normal and practicable (Photo 92). These representations occur at prominent places on the facades and *śobhāpaṭṭikās*, on the *jagatī* and *adhishṭhāna* outside the temple as well as inside the inner *pradakshinā*.[2] The representations are bold and frank, and there is not the least show of inhibition on the part of the carvers Artistically, they are beautiful compositions with a fine sense of proportion and linearism. A notable feature of this group is the presence of a third party with the cohabiting couples in some cases (Photos 93-97).[3] Some erotic scenes of this variety are apparently sectarian.

Group V consists of the group of male and female figures engaged in fantastic poses of sexual congress In one such acrobatic scene a male stands on his head and enjoys three women simultaneously, one seated on him and two flanking him and helping in the act (Photo 99)[4] In another, it is the lady who stands on her head and the male partner takes her position The flanking ladies stand as above (Photo 100).[5] This group, the smallest, is represented only by a limited number of compositions which occur on the *antarāla* facades of some of the larger temples of Khajuraho.

The last group, i e, group VI shows scenes of coitus between human beings and animals. Such representations are noticed in the thin friezes in the *pradaksinā* of the Viśwanātha (Photo 101) and the Kaṇḍariyā Mahādeva temples and on the *jagatī* of the Lakshmaṇa temple (Photo 102).[6] The animal participants are the bear, ass, mare, dog, deer, etc

[1] Brahmā, *Dwāraśākhā*, Jav, *Dwāraśākhā* See also K S, pls 21, 66, 72

[2] Lak, *Prad* in rt wall (several scenes), Ibid, *Prad* in back wall (two scenes), Ibid, *Jagatī* rt out (several scenes), Ibid, *Adhis* lt out, Jav, rt out, Ibid, back out, Ibid, lt out, Brahmā, *Śikhara-rathikā* lt out

[3] Kand, lt out, Ibid, rt out, Viswa, lt out

[4] Kand, rt out

[5] Viswa, lt out

[6] This is a newly discovered sculpture which came to light as a result of clearance of the portion of the *jagatī* of the Lakshmaṇa temple, which had been joined so far by a common platform with the Mātaṅgeśvara temple

84 Divine Couple, Khajuraho Museum

85 Amorous Couples, Khajuraho Museum











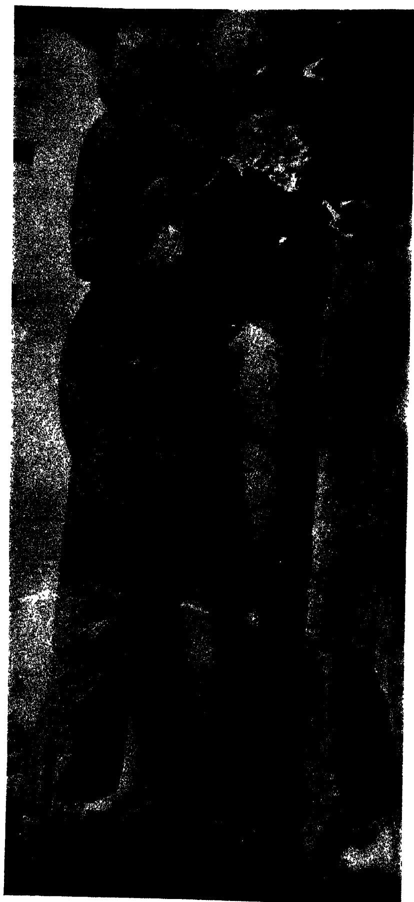
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These sculptures have aroused much interest and controversy. Scholars of late have been paying attention to them and many explanations have been put forward, some fantastic, others logical but none convincing enough to be acceptable. Sometimes, the presence of erotic sculptures (particularly in case of Orissan temples) is assigned to the belief that they protect the temples from lightning and thunder or the evil eye.[1] The explanation is a fantastic one and would not be acceptable to the modern man. It is an over simplification of the problem. The large number of erotic sculptures and the minute attention to details paid to them by the sculptors will clearly show that they represented something much more. Another explanation, equally fantastic and unsupported by any text, is the theory that these sculptures were deliberately carved on the temples to attract the common man to the house of god. In discovering the images of an erotic nature he would naturally wander into the dark corners of the temple and in doing so automatically come into contact with the fragrance of flowers and incence, hear the sounds of bells of worship, and see the sacred light, and ultimately would be influenced by the spiritual atmosphere.[2] On the analogy of obscene sculptures in a Tantric Buddhist shrine in Tibet and their purpose, it is suggested that similar sculptures on the facades of Brahmanical temples were intended to test the concentration of the devotee before he was entitled to have an entry into the temple.[3] Gangoly has traced the erotic sculptures from *mithuna* motifs, the presence of which was sanctioned by ancient texts.[4] But he does not explain why these sculptures were at all recommended in the beginning before they took aggressive form; why the texts considered *mithuna* as auspicious symbols on the monuments? Pramod Chandra interprets some of the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho as an exhibition of religious rites and practices of Kaula and Kāpālika ascetics.[5] The references to Kāpālikas

[1] Cf. W. T. Elmore, *Dravidian Gods in Modern Hinduism*; E. B. Havell, *The Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India*; Max-Pol Fouchet, *The Erotic Sculpture of India*.

[2] Alain Danielou, article in *Marg*, 1948.

[3] *Proc. Ind. Hist. Cong.*, 1945, p. 97; Max-Pol Fouchet, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

Following is an account of the purpose of and activities in the obscene idol houses of Tibetan shrines given by Harrison Foreman (*Through Forbidden Tibet*, 1936, pp. 107ff.)

'The Idol-house is filled with obscene images. To put it very bluntly, those idols represent all the postures the mind of man has been able to conceive having to do with copulation. When a lama has reached the point in his spiritual training where he believes that he can look upon the flesh without desire or emotion, he enters the Obscene Idol-house for "post-graduate examination" and to conduct "experimental researches". Extremely life like figures in the most lewd postures are calculated to prove to him definitely just how much good his years of concentration upon the negation of things worldly, how much his endless meditation and training in things intellectual has done for him. The nude figures of voluptuous women play a large part in this deeply serious rite, seen in sex play with the gods and demons; for it is an attempt to make copulation a visual appeal to the senses. Should a lama find that he can look unmoved at the obscene idols he may then take up the next stage. Living women are selected and trained for this very purpose. Usually a lama sits alone before them—though sometimes small groups of lamas will perform these strange rites at the same time. There is a deliberate exhibition wherein the trained girls show all the arts and wiles of womanhood such as men always seek but so seldom find. The very acme of lustful desire is here pictured.'

[4] 'Mithuna in Indian Art,' *Rupam*, 1925; 'Some Notes on Mithuna in Indian Art,' Ibid., 1926, may also be seen.

[5] 'Kaula-Kāpālika Cults in Khajuraho,' *Lalita Kala*, 1956.

and their degraded practices are referred to in such medieval works as *Mālatī-mādhava* of Bhavabhūti, *Kathāsaritsāgara* of Somadeva, *Vetāl Pañcha Viṁśatikā*, *Narmamālā* of Kshemendra, *Karpūrmañjarī* of Rājaśekhara and *Prabodha-chandrodaya* of Krishṇa Miśra. The sculptural delineations, Pramod Chandra feels, closely follow the literary descriptions. Tripathi has, however, challenged the theory of Pramod Chandra and has shown with the help of literary and epigraphic evidence that 'shaven-headed sky-clothed ascetics are none other than the Digambara Jaina monks' and that it was to arouse among the masses a feeling of dislike and hatred against the objectionable practices of the Digambara monks that these erotic scenes were displayed on the Hindu temples.[1] This is a fairly logical interpretation but with all its merits it will explain away only a limited number of sculptures. Very often the *mithuna* sculptures of Khajuraho are interpreted as symbolising the spiritual ecstasy of the Soul merging with the Divine. Thus the motif would stand for the identification of *Atman* with *Brahman*.[2] This interpretation, amply corroborated by the *Upanishads* and other religious texts, will explain only the couples shown indulging in passionate kisses and embraces. It will not explain the sculptures in which the aim of the artist is just to depict carnal delight. Some interpretations have hardly any logic behind them and hence may summarily be rejected. One such view is that the temples were an open book on erotics and a means of sex education.[3] The scholars supporting this view do not say anything convincing as to why of all places, the temples were chosen for this purpose. There is no textual corroboration for this theory as well.

The erotic sculptures of Khajuraho indeed are immensely perplexing and it is not at all an easy task to give an explanation for them. This difficulty is due to the simple fact that not one but many factors were responsible for the erotic sculptures. Any attempt to explain away these carvings with only one factor in mind is bound to leave a lacuna in the approach to an interpretation. Unfortunately, the explanations suggested by scholars so far have not been as comprehensive as to include all the sculptures of an erotic nature. While attempting to explain the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho, we should bear in mind the maxim that nothing in the course of history happens abruptly or suddenly. Every happening howsoever insignificant is conditioned partly by its background, the beginnings of which may lie in earlier centuries, and partly by the contemporary environment, just as the personality of a growing child and a maturing adult develops according to the social surroundings he lives in and is also conditioned by heredity. The erotic sculptures of Khajuraho should be studied in their proper historical context. They would no longer come as a surprise if one studies them against their social, religious, literary and aesthetic background. It is necessary

[1] 'The Erotic Scenes of Khajuraho and Their Probable Explanation,' *Bhāratī*, No 3, pp 82ff
[2] Cf Radhakamal Mukerjee, *The Culture and Art of India*, pp 80-81
[3] Cf *K S*, pp 47-48

in this connection to understand the attitude of Indians of the preceding centuries towards love, sensual pleasure and sex in order to be able to understand such sculptures.

INDIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE AND SEX

India of ancient times is generally regarded as a nation of philosophers. 'Their struggles were the struggles of thought; their past the problem of creation; their future, the problem of existence.'[1] But this is a one-sided view of the Indian mind and hence a wrong generalization about the Indian people. Indians were as much after the acquisition of the material fulfilment of desire as any other peoples of the world. Explaining India's attitude towards social ideas and institutions Aurobindo observes : ' . . . Its spiritual extremism could not prevent it from fathoming through a long era the life of the senses and its enjoyments, and there too it sought the utmost richness of sensuous detail and the depths and the intensities of sensuous experience.'[2] N. K. Devaraja interprets Indian culture from this new angle. The following remarks from his introduction to *The Mind and Spirit of India* may not be out of place :

'The claim, then, made by both admirers and the detractors of Indian culture that the people here were highly religious, and therefore excessively otherwordly, is both spurious and unreasonable It cannot be substantiated by any kind of objective evidence. Notwithstanding the great idealistic-absolutistic systems of philosophy that Indian thinkers produced, the people in general continued to believe in and worship numerous gods and goddesses, even ghosts and spirits, and to pray to them, in the manner of the Ṛgvedic Aryans, for worldly success and prosperity. The Mahābhārata which, on one hand, is full of moral and religious questionings, is also, on the other, aware of the refinements of vice and depths of degradation of which human beings are capable. And the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, which loom large not only in the epics but also in the entire medieval literature, are as prone to indulge in unscrupulous and immoral behaviour as the human mortals ; they are no better and no worse in respect of morality than the gods and goddesses of the pagan world.'

Indian writers of *Nītis* as well as thinkers like Śankara have laid great emphasis on exercising control over mind and senses, which 'testifies rather to the predisposition of the Indian temperament to be attracted towards pleasures of the flesh.'[3]

The attitude of Indians towards sex in the past was quite different from the present one. Sex in those days was never frowned upon. *Kāma* or pursuit of pleasure was among the four ideals to be achieved by every individual of the society; the other three were *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Moksha*, the religious obligation,

[1] Max Muller, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p 31

[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*.

[3] *Bhāratī*, No 8, Pt I, p 33

acquisition of wealth, and salvation respectively. Gratification of sexual desires was regarded as essential as any other religious or social duty. Marriage, the very basis of which is the unification of the two sexes, was included amongst the principal sacraments and a religious sanctity was attached to it Every bride had to promise to bear progeny for the bridegroom and all material delight and pleasure to him before the flaming fire as divine witness. Marriage was regarded as a must for a maiden, without which she was *asaṁskṛitā*.[1] Ancient Indian thinkers made it quite clear that the 'end and reward of women is indeed the pleasure of love and children and the barren wife is worthless Nay, what a childless woman looks on, that the gods and forbears will not accept at the sacrifice, for it is stained ; and the gifts that are made by a woman without a husband and children, rob the receiver of his life powers.'[2] Some of the orthodox Hindus will not drink the water of the river Yamunā even today as she is not wedded and hence her water is not clean. The birth of a male child was cherished by every individual since the son led him to heaven. In case the man was bereft of the power to beget a son he allowed his wife to get the seed from one as strong and illustrious as himself. Pāṇḍu who was prevented from the use of his manly powers bewails his lot for being condemned to unhappiness in this world and the next for not having a son and ultimately exhorts his wife Kuntī to get a son by one who is equal to or better than him [3]

It was obligatory for a man to have sexual congress with his wife at the proper time and it was a sin on his part not to visit his wife during the *ritu* [4] Cohabition during the *ritu* was a virtue by which a man obtained heaven and a *Śūdra* was born as a Brahmin [5]

Torn with passion the two lovers often united in matrimony by mutual consent. This was called *gandharva vivāha*, included in the eight recognised forms of marriage in ancient India. The consent of parents, witness of fire and the priests to conduct the marriage ceremony were not required. King Dushyanta and Śakuntalā were united thus and exercised their conjugal rights straight way. The basis of the *gandharva* form of marriage was obviously sexual urge and passion above anything else.

This sort of attitude towards life which attached considerable importance to worldly pleasure and sensuous enjoyment gave rise to erotic literature, both technical and general. The former consisted of literature on the *Kāmaśāstra*, while the latter of the literature with erotic elements

[1] *Vishnu*, XXIV, 41 See also *Manu*, II, 67 and *Yājñavalkya*, I, 67 The parents not marrying their grown up daughter were doing the sin equivalent to a Brahmin's murder Nārada (XII, 25-27), Yājñavalkya (I, 64) and others explained that by not marrying the matured daughter who is having her courses, they are guilty of the heinous crime of killing the embryo

[2] J J Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India*, Vol 1, pp 155-6

[3] Ibid, p 160 This ancient custom is known as *niyoga* or levirate

[4] *Rāmāyana*, II, 75, *Mahābhārata*, VII, 17, 28-36, *Mārkandeya Purāṇa*, XIV, 1ff, *Parāśara*, IV, 12

[5] *Mahābhārata*, XIII, 144, 13-14, XIII, 143,29ff

LITERATURE ON EROTICS

Kāma, as noted earlier, was one of the proper ends of life. As on such other subjects as *Arthaśāstra*, *Dharmaśāstra*, etc., a mass of literature was produced on the *Kāmaśāstra*, or the Science of Love. This subject was treated with as much care, attention and seriousness as *Dharma* or *Artha* or any other scientific or technical subject. Like all important sciences, *Kāmaśāstra* was also considered to be of divine origin, having been first formulated by Prajāpati. It is said that he wrote a book of 100,000 chapters dealing with three topics, *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*. While the portions dealing with *Dharma* and *Artha* were later summarised by Manu and Brihaspati respectively, those pertaining to *Kāma* were abridged by Nandī, the follower of Śiva, into 1,000 chapters.[1] The abridged work of Nandī was further reduced to 500 chapters by Śvetaketu, the son of Uddvālaka, and this was ultimately reproduced in an abridged form in only 150 chapters by Babhravya. There it was divided under seven heads, namely, *Sādharana* (general topics), *Samprayogika* (embraces and so on), *Kanyā Samprayuktaka* (union of males and females), *Bhāryādhikārika* (on one's own wife), *Paradārika* (on the wives of other people), *Vaiśika* (on courtesans) and *Aupanishadika* (on the arts of seduction, tonics, medicines and so on) [2]

The above mentioned seven parts were discussed separately by Chārāyaṇa (first part), Suvarṇanābha (second part), Ghoṭakamuka (third part), Gonardiya (fourth part), Goṇikaputra (fifth part), Dattaka (sixth part) and Kuchumāra (seventh part).[3] Since each of these monographs was of a specialised nature and the original work of Babhravya was difficult to master on account of its length, the *Sāstra* was getting lost. Vātsyāyana, however, rescued this science at a critical time and composed his *Kāmasūtra* as an abstract of the entire bulk of literature on *Kāmaśāstra* preceding him within a reasonable size.

The *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana is the earliest work on Indian erotics which is available to us. The work, however, makes it quite clear that there was a floating mass of literature on erotics before Vātsyāyana that he largely utilized for his compendium. He planned his work in seven parts (*adhikarana*) and sixty-four topics (*prakarana*). Of seven parts the first deals with generalities, the purpose of the book, the three ends of man, the sciences, the character of an elegant citizen and the description of friends and go-betweens who help him in his intrigues. Part II discusses the modes of sexual union; Part III treats of relations with maidens, courtship and marriage, etc.; Part IV discusses relations with married women; Part V discusses relations with the women of others; Part VI deals with courtesans, and Part VII, the secret means of securing love.

[1] Note the affiliation of Śiva, the most virile god of the Brahmanical pantheon and bull who is known for his sexual strength with the early exposition of the *Kāmaśāstra*

[2] *The Kamasutra of Vatsyayana*, Tr Richard Burton and F F Arbuthnot (1965), pp xxxiii-xxxiv

[3] Ibid, p xxxiv.

In order to know the nature of Vātsyāyana's approach towards modes of enjoying love, it will be sufficient here to give a brief synopsis of Part II of the *Kāmasūtra*. It is as follows:

I. Kinds of union according to dimensions, force of desire or passion and time.
II. On the embraces.
III. On kissing.
IV. On pressing or marking or scratching with the nails.
V. On biting, and the means to be employed with regard to women of different regions.
VI. On various ways of lying down and the different kinds of congress.
VII. On the various modes of striking and on the sounds appropriate to them.
VIII. On women acting the part of a man; and on the work of a man.
IX. On mouth congress.
X. On how to begin and how to end the congress; different kinds of congress and love quarrels.

Vātsyāyana's work was so well composed, precise and scientific that it not only eclipsed all previous treatises but left little for future authors to write about. It is quite certain that the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana was largely utilised by poets and dramatists to guide them in their descriptions of the love scenes.[1]

It is significant to note here that after a complete lull of six hundred years or so, the *Kāmaśāstra* attracted the attention of authors and their patrons in the medieval period and there was an unprecedented enthusiasm in writing works on erotics. Even the literature of a general nature was strongly influenced by such writings. The *Kuṭṭanīmatam* of Damodaragupta, a minister of Jayapīḍa of Kashmir, is a representative example of this type of works. The book is in the form of advice of an elderly prostitute to a new entrant and is full of pornographic details about sexual union. At one place a prostitute is made to say, 'Let me tell you, friend, of a singular thing a boorish fellow of a lover did to me to-day; I had closed my eyes in ecstasy of the moment, when thinking me dead he took fright and let go of me.'[2] Later works on sex topics were poor imitations of the *Kāmasūtra*. The *Ratirahasya*[3] of Kokkoka was composed sometime before the 13th century and claims to have used the writings of Nandikeśvara and Goṇika-

[1] A B Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p 468

[2] Quoted in Ibid, p 236, *Kuṭṭanīmatam*:
शृणु सखि कौतुकमेकं ग्रामीणाक-कामिना यदद्य कृतम् ।
सुरतसुखमीलिताक्षी मृतेति भीतेन मुक्ताऽस्मि ॥ ३९९ ॥
The similar idea has been expressed in the *Gāthāsaptaśati*
आर्या मोहनसुप्ता मृतेति मुक्त्वा पलायिते हलिके ।
दरस्फुटितफलोदराभि: हसितं इव कार्पासीभि: ॥ ४/६० ॥

[3] One *Ratirahasya* has been attributed to a certain Nāgārjuna (A. B Keith, op cit, p 469)

putra.[1] Kokkoka or Kokā Paṇḍita is known to have been himself an extraordinarily virile man. The following story is current about him in this connection: 'The Pandit was a courtier and one day a naked Yakshi, burning with passion, presented herself in the open court before the king. His Majesty wished to know of her the reason for this shameless behaviour; upon which the Yakshi explained that she had been wandering in vain through the fourteen worlds in search of a male who could give her satisfaction in sexual congress. Many men, gods and even Rakshasas (evil spirits) had tried, she said, but failed; and now she had come to the royal assembly to see if she could meet a male equal to the task. The king, master of many women as he was, shrank back from the Yakshi, and many a noble hung his head in shame. Our Kokka Pandit now rose from the assembly and took the subject in hand. He led her to an antechamber, and before the court dispersed brought her back to the king well-clothed, a model of modesty, weeping with fatigue by repeated congress with the master of the art and science of love.'[2]

Kalyāṇamalla was another famous author on erotics who wrote his treatise known as *Anaṅgaranga*, which was based on the earlier works *Kāmasūtra* and *Ratirahsaya*, and was translated by Muslim writers into Urdu, Persian and Arabic. The *Nāgarasarvasva* of Padmaśrī (10th-14th century A.D.), the *Pañchaśāyaka* of Jyotirīśvara Kairśekhara (1st half of the 14th century), the *Ratiratnapradīpikā* of Mahārāja Devarāja (17th century A.D.) and the *Ratimañjarī* of an unknown Jayadeva are small and insignificant works on the *Kāmaśāstra* and almost entirely confine themselves to the discussion on the topic of sexual union.[3] *Sringāravairāgya* was written in about A.D. 1276 by one Somaprabha in 46 stanzas. This erotic-ascetic poem 'describes the charms of wonder and the brandishments of love with all the arts of Kāmaśāstra, as a warning against them as being an obstacle to peace of mind and release.'[4] Certain commentaries written on the *Kāmasūtra* and the *Ratirahasya* should also be mentioned to complete this sketchy survey of the literature on erotics. The *Kāmasūtra* has five commentaries as follows[5]: (1) Commentary by Yaśodhara known as *Jayamaṅgalā*, (2) Commentary by Bhāskara, (3) Commentary by Malladeva, (4) *Kandarpachūḍāmani* by Vīrabhadra (it was a faithful metrical exposition of the *Kāmasūtra*), (5) Commentary by an anonymous author. Kshemendra of Kashmir wrote *Vātsyāyanasūtrasāra*, which was a summary of the *Kāmasūtra*. The *Ratirahasya* has similarly four commentaries by Kāñchināth, Rāmachandra, Prabhu and Harihara.[6]

The above account of literature on the *Kāmaśāstra* will make it quite clear that

[1] S K De, *Ancient Indian Erotics and Erotic Literature* (1959), p 105. The *Ratirahasya* has been recently translated into English by Alex Comfort under the title *The Koka Shastra and Other Medieval Indian Writings on Love*, 1964 The work has a learned preface by W. G Archer We have used this work for referring to the *Ratirahasya*. Another recent and authentic translation is by S. C. Upadhyaya, 1965

[2] P. Thomas, *Kāma Kalpa* (1959), p 75

[3] S. K. De, op. cit, p. 105.

[4] Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature* (1953), Vol II, p 573

[5] P Thomas, op cit, p 76.

[6] Ibid, p. 76

conjugal pleasure was an important aspect of life and the learned authors always tried to discover means to increase the pleasures of union Kalyāṇamalla, the author of *Anangaranga*, rightly observes that the company of women is but one reality in this world and that it was equal, if not superior, to the union with the Infinite. *Kāmaśāstra* was studied by men of taste who desired to practise refinement. Women who came in contact with gentlemen, such as courtesans, also mastered it. In medieval India, kings and nobles indulged in luxury and material pleasures. They maintained large harems and also enjoyed the company of public women. In such an atmosphere *Kāmaśāstra* was all the more studied and no stigma was attached to it.

LITERATURE WITH SENSUOUS AND EROTIC ELEMENTS

Indian literature in general is also full of erotic elements. Poets and authors have freely described varied sentiments of lovers and the enchanting beauty of a maiden's youth and voluptuousness. They relish describing a woman's full-orbed bosom and slender limbs. Passionate embrace, loosening of the garment, sexual appeal of the hair and side glances are painted with great artistic skill. Sometimes the tender emotions of a bashful wife, the pangs of a lover far from the beloved, casual quarrels and flattery of lovers, quiet humour, and so on, are real masterpieces of the literary art. That ardent love is inseparable from sex is clearly implied in the love themes of Indian poets and dramatists, who unhesitatingly describe the sensuous charms of a lady and her amorous sports with her lover. Following is a bird's-eye-view of the treatment of love and sex in Indian literature.[1]

The first passionate expression of love and physical contact is found in the Rigvedic dialogue between Yama and Yamī, wherein the latter persuades the former to unite with her for the continuation of the human race. Her desire is quite explicit :

'I, Yamī, am possessed by love of Yama,
That I may rest on the same couch beside him.'[2]

Sometimes the composer of the *Rigveda* used an imagery which was stamped with erotic elements. The Aśvins are asked as to where they had been in the night. 'Who draws you to his house, as a widow does her husband's brother to the couch, or a woman does a man?'

The Buddhist attitude towards love and sex was quite different. The ideals of spiritual attainments have obscured the tender emotions and earthly love. But still, here and there, there are a few love themes In *Dīgha-nikāya*, the passionate Gandharva addresses the lady :

[1] The reader is advised to see the detailed treatment of the subject in S K De's learned paper 'Treatment of Love in Sanskrit Literature,' published in *Ancient Indian Erotics and Erotic Literature* (1959), pp 1ff We acknowledge our indebtedness to this work for the references

[2] English renderings from S K De, unless otherwise stated

'E'en as an elephant with heat oppressed,
Hies to some still pool, upon whose face
Petals and pollen of the lotus float,
So would I sink within thy bosom sweet.
E'en as an elephant fretted by the hook
Dashes unheeding curb and goad aside,
So I crazed by the beauty of thy form,
Know not the why and wherefore of my acts.'

The great Indian epic, the *Mahābhārata*, is full of romantic episodic stories in which eroticism plays a dominant role. It presents a pattern of sexual morality that would abash many orthodox Hindus today. It is a fact that almost all the great heroes of the *Mahābhārata* were born illegitimate in the modern sense of morality. Even Vyāsa, the illustrious author and compiler of the epic, was born of unmarried Satyavatī, who allowed an embrace to Parāśara, when he was torn with sexual passion. Satyavatī in a peculiar circumstance had come into being in the belly of a fish, who was a cursed Apsarā. After she was cut open and the child was exposed, it was given to a fisherman who became the foster father of the child. In course of time the child grew into a beautiful maiden except that she had a fish-like smell. She took over the working of a ferry-boat of her father over the Yamunā. 'Then there came one day the Rishi or holy man Parasara to be ferried over. He at once fell in love with the lovely-thighed one, and without waiting made her this proposal: "Be joined with me, lovely one." She spoke: "See, O holy man, the Rishis are standing on the other shore. How could we unite while they see us?" Thus, addressed by her, the holy and glorious, the mighty one, brought about a mist by which that whole neighbourhood was changed, as it were, into one stretch of darkness. But when she saw this mist, made by the excelling Rishi, the maiden was greatly astonished and ashamed, poor girl. Satyavatī spoke: "Know, O holy man, that I am a maid, and still subject to my father. Through a union with thee my maidenhood would be lost, O blameless one. And if my maidenhood is harmed, how shall I be able, O Rishi, best of the twice-born, to go home? I cannot then live, O wise man. Think over this O glorious one, and then do what lies next to hand." To her thus speaking, said the best of Rishis, filled with joy and love: "When thou has done me this favour, then shalt thou become a maid again. And choose thyself, thou fearful one, a favour thou wouldst have, O fair one. For never upto now has my goodwill been without result, thou with the bright smile." Thus, spoken to, she chose the loveliest sweet scent in her limbs, and the holy man gave her what she yearned for above all. After she had won the favour, filled with joy, and decked with the greatest gift of woman (a sweet smell), she united herself with the wonder-working Rishi.'[1] This is only one of the numerous stories of this kind. Karṇa, the great

[1] Quoted from J. J. Meyer, op cit., Vol. I, pp. 39-40.

hero of the epic, was also a pre-marital child of Kuntī like Vyāsa; and Kuntī's three other sons, Yudhishṭhira, Arjuna and Bhīma, were not begotten by her husband but by the gods Yama, Indra and Maruta respectively.

The blindness of passionate love is described in the *Mahābhārata* in the unhappy episode of Pāṇḍu who was cursed to die as soon as he united in sexual congress. Once he was roaming in a forest with his wife Mādrī in springtime. 'When Pāṇḍu beheld the forest with its bloom and fruit-laden trees, its varied waters and lotus-clumps, love came into his heart. As now he roamed there with joy-lifted mind like an immortal, Mādrī wearing magnificent garb, alone was with him. As now he gazed on the youthful one, clad in thin garments, his love blazed up, like a fire lit in the thick forest, and as he stealthily beheld the lotus-eyed one thus alone, he was overcome with longing and could not keep back his passion. And then the king fell with force on her that was alone, although the queen kept him off, and sought with the strength of her body, to wrest herself away. But his senses filled with love, he gave no thought to the curse. In love's longing, forcibly he drew nigh to Mādrī, and himself drew nigh to death, fallen under the spell of love's desire, as he bade fear begone, goaded on by fate.'[1] At one place in the *Mahābhārata*, ordinary love-play has been suggested indirectly by a beautiful imagery. To describe the horses running on the battle-field, it is said:

> 'Trampled by the hoofs of these steeds, the earth shone in many colours like a woman that is marked with scratches this way and that by the nails (of the lover) '[2]

Kālidāsa's works, full of delicate descriptions of the situations and emotions of love, have great literary merit. Though an illustrious poet of original imageries and situations, he often becomes conventional in matters of love. He describes the feminine charm often in a highly erotic style with a poetic flight of imagination. In the *Kumārasaṁbhava*, he has not even hesitated to ascribe sexual attributes to the gods and paint their amours. The *Meghadūta* of Kālidāsa is a consistent love poem in which are described the pangs and longings of a lover who is away from his lady-love. There is a description of bashful Yaksha ladies in the company of their lovers:

> 'When the quick hands of the ardent lovers cast aside the garment, already loosened by the untying of its knot, the bashful and bewildered Yaksha-damsels throw a handful of scented dust, fruitlessly, at the rich lamp-like jewels, which burn with a high flame.'[3]

While describing the sensuous beauty of the attractive maidens, Kālidāsa, in the

[1] Quoted from J. J Meyer, op cit, pp 235-36
[2] *Mahābhārata*, IX 9 13
[3] Quoted from S K De

Raghuvaṁśa, is attracted towards the hair decoration of a lady and attributes sexual appeal to it:

> 'In the hair of the young damsels, unbraided, perfumed and still wet after a bath, and decorated with the evening jasmine, the god of love regained his strength, which had been diminished by the departure of spring.'[1]

Dushyanta's woodland love with lovely Śakuntalā, which is the subject matter of the *Abhijñāna Śākuntalam*, is too well known to be repeated.

There are works in Indian literature which were apparently inspired by the *Kāmaśāstra* and their descriptions are frank and conventional. The poets delighted in the description of the exposed limbs of ladies. Māgha describes the sportive activities of the ladies of Krishṇa's household on the Raivataka mountain. One lady wanted to gather some flowers in the presence of her lover. In so doing she exposed the nail-marks which she bore in the beautiful region of the arm-pit.[2] The arm-pits were also exposed to the great delight of the lover when the ladies were busy in making their coiffure,[3] or removing their garments.[4] Similarly in another piece of imagination, Māgha describes that while seeing her lover approaching, her lower garment was loosened in the hurry and bewilderment caused by his presence. She, however, adjusted it anyhow but in so doing her thigh was exposed.[5] Bhavabhūti in the *Mālatīmādhava* describes with great imagination the firm, voluminous and bare bosoms of the ladies.[6] A lady coming from her bath has her garments drenched, consequently clinging to the body, revealing the curves and contours of the limbs. In order to cover her heavy breasts she places her hands on them crosswise.[7] Madayantikā, narrating her love experiences in the dream, says that even attempting to move away from her lover, she could not do so, because her thighs got obstructed by the waist-girdle which getting loose and slipping down made the movement of the thighs rather difficult.[8] In the *Naishadhīyacharita* of Śrīharsha we read that when Nala entered the palace of Damayantī, he saw a damsel whose breast-cloth had been suddenly displaced by the wind and her bosom thus exposed.[9] Nala feels jealous of the garment which embraces Damayantī's thighs and buttocks and clings to her breasts.[10] In sport, Nala drenches her completely as a result of which the garment clings to her body and she seems practically nude.[11] The sports of Nala-Damayantī in

[1] *Raghuvaṁśa*, XVI. 50.
[2] *Śiśupālavadha*, VII 32.
[3] Ibid, XI. 69, VII. 40.
[4] Ibid., V 23
[5] Ibid, IX. 75.
[6] *Mālatīmādhava*, VII. 1.45. VII. 2.448-50.
[7] Ibid., IV. 2. 148-51.
[8] Ibid., VII. 2. 149-50.
[9] *Naishadhīyacharita*, VI. 18.
[10] Ibid., XX. 148.
[11] Ibid., XX. 129.

the inner chamber have also been described. The hero of the *Nāgānanda* is bewildered to see the maiden with ornaments and jewellery. He asks:

> 'The burden of thy bosom serves to weary thy waist; why add the weight of thy necklace? The thighs are wearied by the bearing of thy buttocks; why wear this tinkling girdle? Thy feet are powerless in carrying the load of thy thighs; why add a pair of anklets? Thou art adorned by the grace of thine own limbs; why dost thou wear ornaments to thy weariness?'[1]

The seductive charms of the ladies, their physical forms, individual limbs and amorous sports have been described by many other poets and authors, including Bhāravi in *Kirātārjunīya*, Maṅkha in *Srīkanṭhacharita*, Bilhaṇa in *Vikramāṅkadevacharita*, Vākpatirāja in *Gauḍavaho*, Hemachandra in *Kumārapālacharita*, and Vāgbhaṭṭa in *Neminirvāna*, to name but a few. Hāla's *Gāthāsaptaśatī* presents a variety of sentiments of love and opens new avenues in the treatment of this theme. The majority of his seven hundred verses are clearly erotic in nature. Hāla's contribution to love poetry is great as he proved that love can very well form the exclusive theme of poetry and as many as seven hundred verses can be written on it. In the same way Amaru also demonstrated the scope of this theme by his *Sataka*. The love sentiments expressed by him have freshness and vitality. Following is a description of a newly wedded wife:

> 'When her husband touches her garment, she bends her head in shyness; when he seeks a sudden embrace, she moves away her limbs in modesty; when her eyes fall on her laughing companions, she is unable to speak; at the first jest the heart of a newly wedded wife is oppressed with bashfulness.'[2]

Elsewhere is described a simple sentiment of love enlivened by subtle humour:

> 'Seeing her chamber empty the young wife rose gently from her couch, and having gazed intently on the face of her husband who was feigning sleep, she kissed him unsuspectingly. But when she saw his cheeks thrilled by her touch she bent her head in shame, only to be kissed long and lovingly by her lover as he laughed at her distress.'

The *Sringāraśataka* of Bhartrihari opens with an adoration to Kāmadeva—the god of love. He describes in several verses the beauty and attraction of a female form and does not forget to emphasise the seductiveness of the hard bosom, heavy buttocks and naughty glances. Sometimes a frank erotic theme is introduced when he mentions the different stages of the game of love and calls those lucky who enjoy the passionate kiss of their lady-love:

[1] *Nāgānanda*, III 6.
[2] Quoted from S K De.

'Lying on the chest with hair-knot loosened
And eyes half closed (in ecstasy)
Perspired cheeks due to fatigue of amorous sport—
Only fortunate persons drink the ambrosia of lips of such ladies.'[1]

A realistic and genuine sentiment has been expressed in the following verse:

'As long as we see not our beloved
Our one longing is for sight
When we see her
Our one desire is to enjoy the embrace
When embraced our one prayer is
That our two bodies may be made one.'[2]

According to tradition Mayūra Bhaṭṭa, the court poet of Harshavardhana, was so overcome by the beauty of his own daughter that he composed *Sringāra-ashṭaka*, eight stanzas in which he praised her in a lascivious manner. Cursed to become a leper for this sin, he later composed *Sūryaśataka*, hundred stanzas in praise of Sūrya, the Sun-god, to cure himself of his leprosy. It is likely that the design of the Konarak temple of Orissa in the form of a celestial car drawn by seven horses was suggested to its builder, Narasiṁha Deva I (A.D. 1230-1246), by the verses of Mayūra.[3] While he sings the glories of the Sun in manifold ways in his *Sūryaśataka*, he is frankly erotic in the descriptions of his *Sringāra-ashṭaka*. A glimpse of this can be had from the following:

'Her locks in bewildering disorder, wounded by her lover's nails, and torn to pieces by his teeth,
Has this fair maiden been loved by a demon, and has he, imitating tiger sport, enjoyed her?
Has this maiden been ravished, and then let go? With wandering glance, and garments clinging to her perspiring limbs,
She flits, at dawn, like a fawn, timid and frightened. What he has sipped the nectar of her blooming lips?
By whom has Paradise been enjoyed to-day? Whom has Kama, once slain by Shiva's eye, blessed today?
With her hand holding her heavy hair adorned with flowers crushed in the game of love,
Her upper garment and loose girdle gathered in her right, her hair dishevelled and face swollen and languid her passion stated,
Here she comes from the private chamber, having yielded to the power of love, longing for breeze.'[4]

[1] *Śriṅgāraśataka*, Vs 26
[2] Ibid., Vs 23
[3] Cf. *Marg*, Vol XII, No 1, p 2.
[4] Quoted from P Thomas

The *Gītagovinda* of Jayadeva, written in the 12th century A.D., is a work of great literary merit with the rare gift of lyrical splendour, pictorial richness, touches of genuine pathos and devotional fervour. But in his theme he is no different from Bhartrihari's *Sringāraśataka*, Amaru's *Sataka* or Govardhana's *Aryasaptaśatī*, in which *sringāra* with deep erotic impulse is a dominant motif. Whatever may be the mystic symbolism and metaphysical background of the *Gītagovinda*, in its descriptions of the dalliances of Krishṇa and the cow-girls, it is doubtlessly mundane and betrays the influence of *Kāmaśāstra*. In canto II Rādhā who is in a melting mood for amorous sport is yearning for Krishṇa. She narrates to her friend her past experiences of amorous delights with Krishṇa:

> 'As, in love's melting bliss, I lay on the tender couch of sprouts, long did He recline, pillowed on my bosom! And as thus He lay, how madly did I clasp Him, and drink deep of His nectar lips! And, as if not to be outdone by me, madly did He drink deep off my lips, gathering me to His bosom in a crushing embrace!
>
> 'As, in the sweet lassitude that supervened amorous fatigue, I lay still with my eyes closed, and pearly rivulets of sweat bathed my limbs all over in the blissful tremulousness that accompanies love, how He looked on me, thrilled with excitement, His hairs standing on end, and His cheeks aglow with passionate ardour!
>
> 'And, steeped thus in bliss, as I lay cooing softly and indistinctly like a Kokila crooning in its nest, Krishṇa, that adept in amatory art, seized me madly by my locks and showered hot kisses on my lips; and thus by Him dishevelled, my braid undone, my tresses strayed madly, and the flowers bedecking them were all scattered on the couch in admirable confusion! Frantically, deeply did He dent my heaving bosom with His nails in amorous frenzy!
>
> 'As, at the very height of the exciting sport, my anklets tinkled ceaselessly and melodiously, and as the bells in my girdle chattered, as it were, in sweet babel, till finally, unstrung, they raced away to all parts of the couch —how did He cull amorous sweets off me, kissing me again, drawing me close to him by my locks!
>
> 'Overcome by a delicious faintness at the crowning moment of love's fulfilment, I fell limply on the couch, like a creeper. Blissful, I lay in an ineffably sweet langour. He, too, overcome by a similar lassitude, half closed His eyes, beautiful as half-opened lotus. And when again Madhusūdana contemplated my beauty, stretched there in sweet abandon, His passion again mounted to a frenzy. Bring hither, Oh my Sakhi, that vanquisher of Keśi, to sport thus deliciously again with me!'[1]

[1] Quotation from S Lakshminarasimha Śāstrī, *The Gītagovinda Kāvya of Jayadeva* (1956), pp 53-55

Jayadeva describes the *Rāsa-līlā* dance of the belles of Vraja in which Krishṇa is a participant. Surrounded by young and beautiful milkmaids he 'is gathered in wanton embrace by them who caress every limb of his with burning passion' (I, 4.15). And in turn, 'One he clasps in close embrace; another he kisses passionately; yet another he caresses in secret; smitten by the arch smiles of another, he gazes longingly at her, and then abjectly he follows another damsel who, with admirable coquetry, feigns high dudgeon' (I, 4.8). These descriptions are apparently lascivious in spirit and tend to paint the physical love of Krishṇa and the milkmaids, who are entirely humanised. There are numerous works which poorly imitated Jayadeva and described the amorous dalliances of Śiva-Pārvatī, Rāma-Sītā, and also that of Krishṇa-Rādhā. But the climax of attributing sexual attribute to divine beings is reached in Lakshmaṇa Āchārya's *Chaṇḍīkuchapañchaśikā* which describes the beauty of Chaṇḍī's breasts in fifty stanzas.'[1]

SEX AND RELIGION

Let us now turn to religion to investigate the place of sex in rituals and beliefs. To primitive man the abundance of crop, the birth of many sons and daughters, the multiplication of cattle was nothing but the blessings of the invisible power. They were the very basis of his economic prosperity and material comforts, being the vital instruments for agriculture. The growth of crop and green vegetation, the birth of children and multiplication of cattle, were attributed to the sacred generative power of the god who favourably bestowed them on his worshippers. And the man fittingly chose the sexual organs as the symbol of this favour and prosperity. In the earliest days of Rome and Greece, 'we find phalli exhibited outside shops, baked in pastry, hung round children's necks, and, above all, exhibited at places of worship or carried in procession just in the same way, and for much the same reasons, that the cross is exhibited in Christian periods.'[2] The generative organs formed an important part of the ritualistic belief of the chalcolithic culture of Harappa. A number of seals and sealings depicting nude spirits with a plant issuing from their womb, the genital emblems, phalli-shaped stones and rings, the ethiphallic feature of the so called Paśupati depicted on a seal and numerous female terracotta figurines with a stress on the weight of hips against a sophisticated slimness of the waist point to an established belief of the Harappans in the vital force of procreation and fertility. Radhakamal Mukerjee observes: 'The Dryad represents the fecundity of vegetation in the Indus Valley; the nude goddess with a leafy spray gushing out of her womb like a stream represents the reproductive force of *water*; the bull which also appears with three heads in Mohenjodaro represents the power of generation in the *animal* world; and the Śiva prototype together with various conical and cylindrical stones that are obvious phallic emblems the fecundity of man. All this testifies to the profound

[1] S K. De, op. cit, pp. 56-57

[2] G. Rattray Taylor, *Sex in History* (1954), p. 227.

homage that the Indus civilization paid to the principle of reproduction and growth in nature, animal and man.'[1] The worship of the phallus by the Indus Valley people is probably hinted at in the Rigvedic reference to *Siśnadeva,*[2] interpreted as the people whose god was *śiśna* (phallus). The Vedic Aryans were the immediate successors of the Indus Valley people and the religious beliefs of the latter materially enriched the religious myths and practices of the Indo-Aryans. The cult of Śiva and the phallus came to play a very dominant role in the later Śiva and Śakti concepts. Even this day Śiva is popularly worshipped in the form of a *lingaṃ* (phallus), which stands upright on a flat base, the *yoni*, round, oval, polygonal or square in shape. The *lingaṃ-yoni* combination symbolises the male and female sex representing creation of the world. The early representations of the *lingaṃ* are realistic copies of the *penis erectus* (Cf. Gudimallam *Sivalinga*, 2nd century B.C.), but gradually they were stylised in later centuries, though the meaning and symbolism remained the same In the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānas* Śiva is described as completely nude and as *Urdhva-linga* and *Sthira-linga*. He becomes identical with *linga*. In the Middle Ages Śiva and his incarnation Lakuliśa were portrayed nude with emphasis on the ethiphallic feature. When Śiva was represented in anthropomorphic form, representing the same union of two principles, the artist devised his androgynous form—Ardhanārīśvara, half-male and half-female. The male and female bodies are fused into one and the duality is reduced to oneness.

The Śākta ideology particularly is based on the union of male and female principles. The Śāktas regard Umā as the divine mother They worship Umā-Maheśa as the symbol of creation. It is Umā who is the creator and Śiva her mate. To the Śākta, Śakti is superior even to Śiva. She is the female energy who creates and sustains the universe while Śiva is the male principle and helps her in the creation. The Śāktas are broadly divided into Dakshiṇamārgīs and Vāmamārgīs. The latter insist on complete secrecy in their worship based on *pañchatattva*. Basham briefly summarises their Tantric rites as follows: 'Small group of initiates met at night, often in a temple or private house, but also frequently in a burning-ground, among the bones of the dead The group formed a circle, seated around the circumference of a large circular magical diagram (*yantra, maṇḍala*) drawn on the ground. Though the members of the circle might include brahmanas and outcastes, there was no class distinction at the ceremony —all were equal, and no ritual pollution occurred from their contact. After regular evening worship, the propitiation of ghosts, and other rites, the group would indulge in the five *Ms* (pañcha-makāra) · *madya* (alcoholic drink), *mānsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), *mudrā* (symbolical hand gestures, known in other branches

[1] Radhakamal Mukerjee, *The Flowering of Indian Art* (1964), pp 39-40 For phallic worship in Indus Valley Culture, see Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilisation*, Vol I, pp 59ff, pl XIV, Nos 2 and 4, Vats, *Excavations at Harappa*, Vol. I, pp. 369-71, Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization* (1960), p 89.

[2] *Rigveda*, VII 21 5; X 99 3.



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91 *Embrace Devī Jagadambe Temple (Copyright, Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*

92 *Union Devī Jagadambe Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology Government of India)*



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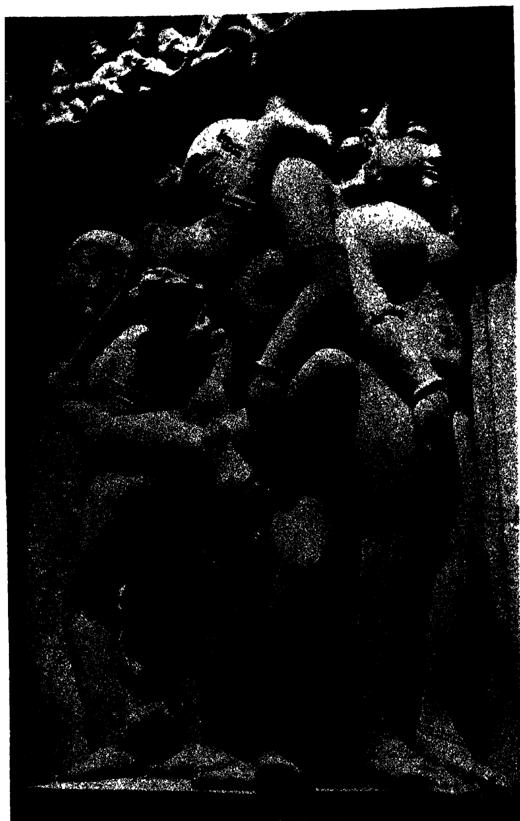
93 *Union. Kandariyā Mahādeva Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*



94

94 Frieze, Kandariya Mahadeva Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)

95 *Union, Khajuraho*



95

of Indian religion, and in dance and drama), and *maithuna* (sexual intercourse). The rites concluded with the worship of five elements, to which the five *Ms* mysteriously corresponded. Among some tantric groups the last of the five *Ms* involved promiscuous copulation, while the members of others brought their wives to the circle'.[1]

The union of the male and the female was symbolic of the Divine bi-unity of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, Śiva and Śakti, Being and Becoming. With the gradual popularity of Tantric sects and the Kaula and Kāpālika sects in the Middle Ages, erotism and pleasurable sensations came to play an unprecedented role in certain religious circles. The religious practices of the Pāśupatas, the Kāpālikas and the Tantric Kaulas were undoubtedly extreme, outlandish and unsocial. The Pāśupatas indulged in many objectionable acts (*sādhanās*) in the modern sense of decency. 'One of these is *Sriṅgāra* which is showing oneself to be in love by means of amorous gestures as if on seeing a beautiful lady.'[2] The esoteric Kaula and Kāpālika rites appear to have been popular in India from the 10th to 13th centuries. The Kāpālikas lived in the spiritual intimacy of the Yoginīs who were conceived as the emanations of Gaurī. They believed in sexual bliss as the means to highest spiritual attainment. 'In any case,' says Mukerjee, 'India between 10th and 13th centuries universally accepted the *Yoga* of sexual conjugation or the mating of lingam of Śiva and Yoni or Śakti as the door to the conquest of the flesh and full spiritual awareness grounded in the compromise and correlation of the aesthetic and sportive function of the sex with the exacting discipline of orthodox *Yoga*. The self has its seat in Yoni, and meditation of the process of conjugation leads to freedom from the bondage of desire. This is the core of the Kaula-mārga.'[3]

The *Upanishads* on the other hand had long ago used the metaphor of sexual union as the symbol of the ecstasy of union of *Atman* with *Brahman* and of *Purusha* with *Prakriti*. Thus, the *Brihadāranyaka* observes: 'In the embrace of his beloved a man forgets the whole world—everything both within and without, in the very same way, he who embraces the self knows neither within nor without.' To quote Stella Kramrisch, 'This state which is "like a man and woman in close embrace" is a symbol of mokṣa, final release or reunion of two principles, the essence and nature (Prakriti).'[4]

There is yet another aspect of the Indian attitude towards religion and gods. Gods and goddesses undoubtedly are the self-projected images of their worshippers. This is best seen in case of Indian gods and goddesses and their manifold mythological stories. Indian gods are never painted as detached from the material aspects of life. Their behaviour is quite often far from transcendental. They are presented as making love, hating, quarrelling, cheating and satisfying their sexual

[1] A L Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (1954), p 337
[2] V S Pathak, 'Śaivism in Early Medieval India, etc,' *Bhāratī*, No 3, p 16
[3] Radhakamal Mukerjee, op. cit, p 192.
[4] *H T*, Vol II, p 346

hunger. Śiva, for instance, 'cuts off one of Brahma's four heads with his sword and throws it into the Ganges. And the goddess Parvati deceives Śiva, her husband, with Agni, god of fire, whom she then hides in her body. Krishṇa, one of the incarnations of Vishṇu, whisks the veils off some cow-girls when they are bathing, gazes upon their nakedness and bewitches them with his flute-playing.[1] And the Aryan gods might even be charged with racial prejudice for they refused to invite the Dravidian Śiva to their festivities, yet bow before him in a somewhat cowardly manner when he threatens to wipe out the universe. They fly into a rage, create monsters and set them when their anger subsides.'[2] One of the versions of the origin of god Gaṇeśa runs thus: 'While walking in the woods, Śiva and Parvati chance upon an elephant in busy dalliance with his mate. Much intrigued by the posture which nature demands of the female elephant, they decide to change themselves into the same shape. And soon Parvati gives birth to a hybrid son, half man and half elephant.'[3] Thus Hindu gods are not at all different from men. As a matter of fact they are the creations of human beings who reflect their own behaviour in narrating their stories or portraying their images.

Brahmanical gods have always been conceived with their consorts who are their Śaktis. The artist took pleasure in depicting them as behaving like human beings. In the Śiva-Pārvatī *parinaya* images, Śiva holds the hand of Pārvatī and god Brahmā acts as a priest for conducting the marriage of the two. In the *Anantaśāyin* form, Vishṇu rests on the coils of Śesha and Lakshmī, his consort, takes his feet in her lap and massages them. *Alingana Mūrtis* of Śiva are very popular in Indian art. Here Pārvatī sits on the lap of Śiva on the left and Śiva gently caresses her breast. Vishṇu-Lakshmī are also similarly depicted. In medieval Indian iconography, probably due to the influence of the Śākta cult, the godly couples became very popular. At Khajuraho, besides the well-known Śiva and Vishṇu, other gods, such as Brahmā, Paraśurāma, Rāma, Kāma, Gaṇeśa, Agni, etc., have also been protrayed in the company of their consorts.

EROTIC ELEMENTS IN INDIAN SCULPTURE

We have so far been trying to see the role that sex played in life, literature and religion. It would now appear that Indians in the past were never ashamed of talking or writing about sex and no sin was attached to it. The art which is the mirror of society was similarly affected and stamped by diverse socio-religious currents. A glance at the varying manifestations of Indian art will show that the motivating force of sex held the artist's imagination in every age and he produced sculptures with an obvious sensuous appeal. Woman, and her youth and voluptuousness, became a recurring theme of Indian art in all the ages. The artist

[1] This theme became quite popular in the Rajput miniature paintings
[2] Max-Pol Fouchet, op cit, p. 8.
[3] Ibid., p. 8

who was brought up in a tradition that attached no stigma to sex, believed in sensual vitality and explored all the possibilities of depicting a woman, whether a Devī or an ordinary housewife, in various attitudes, moods and postures.[1]

The female sculptures with a gliding plastic rhythm, grace and softness as seen in the Yakshīs and Vrikshikās of Bharhut, Sanchi and Mathura, and later with growing refinement, in the river-goddesses—Gaṅgā and Yamunā—of the Gupta period and the Surasundarīs, Apsarās and Śālabhañjikās of the medieval period, are the proud possessions of Indian art. These sculptures are the best specimens of the female form and the standard of feminine beauty. While the artist was fashioning the image of a goddess he only remembered he was recreating the form of a woman who should have ideal beauty and loveliness. He imagined the most enchanting figure in his mind and struck his chisel to enliven the mute stones. Consequently, the image whether of a Yakshī or Gaṅgā, Saraswatī or Lakshmī, Pārvatī or Tārā, is full of the suggestiveness of soft human flesh, provocative in every curve and contour of the body and displaying a languid wantonness on the face. True, there are a few exceptions where the sculptures of the goddesses display delicate restraint, tenderness of emotion, serene detachment and unfathomable tranquillity, but this is the characteristic of the Gupta classicism that only lingered here and there in the medieval sculptures. The sensuousness and human touch is equally perceptible in the images of the male gods—Vishṇu, Śiva, the Avalokiteśvaras, and the Dikpālas, to name a few—in their soft, fleshy and flowing limbs, their suavity and elegance of curves.

The prototypes of the charming females depicted on the medieval temples of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Orissa and Madhya Bharat, are to be seen in the images of the Yakshīs, Śālabhañjikās and Vrikshikās of Bharhut, Sanchi and Mathura; and even earlier in the bronze dancing girl of Mohenjodaro. The latter datable to the third millennium B.C. is all nude, with a little bend in the left knee and a coquettish expression on the face giving an impression of frank eroticism. The Yakshīs of Bharhut are invariably associated with a tree. They are nude above the waist and sometimes, as in case of Sudarśnā Yakshī, their left hands placed below the navel also tend towards erotic suggestions. The bracket Śālabhañjikā at Sanchi, with exposed navel and organs of generation, holding the branch of a blossoming mango tree, is full of frank eroticism. A single necklace of beads lying between the breasts and a heavy *mekhalā* round the waist further accentuate the seductiveness of the form. In the figures of these dryads there is a deliberate emphasis on the swelling breasts and broad pelvis which most probably point to their relationship with fertility. The age old woman-and-tree motif itself, symbolical of the power of the virgins to make the tree blossom by embracing or touching it with

[1] Indian art, whether secular or religious, observes Basham, 'came chiefly from the hands of secular craftsmen, who, though they worked according to priestly instructions and increasingly rigid iconographical rules, loved the world they knew with an intensity which is usually to be seen behind the religious forms in which they expressed themselves.' (*The Wonder That Was India*, 1954, p 347)

the feet, is a fertility concept. The Yakshīs of Mathura,[1] carved in high relief, are even more frank and provocative in the display of their charms. In their sinuous pose, flamboyance and sensuality of expression, these charming dryads surpass anything known in the earlier art of India. The artist often chose such themes as the 'bathing beauty' in which he could justifiably show the nudity of the lady (Pl. XXIII, Fig. 6). The further history of these dryads is a history of refinement. The sensuousness of the Gupta art consists in its suggestiveness rather than in bold exhibitionism, but our prototypes reappear with all their original candour in the medieval period on the monuments of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Orissa and Madhya Bharata in the form of numerous protryals of Surasundarīs, Nāyikās and Śālabhañjikās; only 'the intervening centuries have added elaborate ornaments, coiffure and apparel and a calculated, languid wantonness of the face. Every limb, every torsion, every gesture now displays erotic moods and sentiments (*Sringārarasa*) more charmingly and more convincingly.'[2]

DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE MITHUNA MOTIF

From the erotic suggestiveness of single figures, let us turn to the depiction of couples—more precisely the *mithuna* motif—in Indian Art. (We would not make any discrimination between religious sculptures and secular ones.) The earliest representation of the *mithuna* appears on the jamb of a Jain *torana* in Lucknow Museum (3rd-2nd century B.C.).[3] A man-and-woman couple is depicted standing; the man draws his partner towards him and gently caresses her thigh with his right hand (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 1). Other early representations can be noticed on a Bodh-Gaya medallion (2nd century B.C.) and on the upper panel of a railing pillar of Stupa No. II at Sanchi (2nd century B.C.). On the Sanchi specimen a woman and a man stand on two low pedestals or pillows. The lady has placed her right hand on her belly and affectionately clasps with her left, the right hand of the man (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 2).[4] This is a rudimentary form of the *mithuna* representation and merely on the basis of the pedestals (?) under the feet need not be related to cult icons as suggested by Leeson.[5] The object in question should rather be identified with a pillow or thick padding used by kings and nobles to stand on.[6] At Kārlā Buddhist Chaitya-hall (1st 2nd century B.C.) the figures of male and female pairs are slightly bolder in their frankness. In one case,[7] the lady with ample buttocks and thighs, attenuated

[1] L Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, (1929), Vol II, pls 92 and 93
[2] Radhakamal Mukerjee, *The Flowering of Indian Art* (1964), p 72.
[3] *Rupam*, 1925, pl facing p 53, fig 1
[4] J Marshall, *A Guide to Sanchi* (1955), pl VIIIb
[5] *K S*, p. 26
[6] See for example the famous *Chakravartin* panel from Jaggayapeta, now in Government Museum, Madras Here the king is represented as standing on a pillow
[7] Heinrich Zimmer, *Art of Indian Asia* (1955), Vol II, pl. 83; *K. S*, pl 1/

waist and full round breasts stands cross-legged; she has placed her left arm on the shoulder of her male companion standing to her left, who, in turn, has placed his right hand on her back at the waist. The upturned right arm appearing to support the head adds a touch of lassitude and exposes the breasts to full view. The languid pose of the woman, her voluptuous form, the round and deep navel, and above all, her indulgent look towards her partner, are permeated with extreme sensuousness and frank eroticism. Another sculpture at Kārlā[1] is a little more frank, where the lady with her hands raised above tries to escape her insistent lover and inadvertently reveals her sex through the diaphanous drapery. The male partner to her left has placed his hand on her back with the finger-tips touching the right breast. The sculptures of Kārlā, though marking a distinct advance in the *mithuna* representations, are still mild in form as compared to subsequent examples which we shall presently examine.

In the beginning of the Christian era the art activity mainly centred around Mathura and the north-west giving rise to two distinct art styles. The former, i.e., the Mathura school was a logical development of the indigenous trends of early Indian art, while the latter, i.e., the Gāndhāra school was an alien art flourishing on Indian soil but following the essentials of Indian iconography. There are strictly speaking not many representations of amorous couples in the art of the Mathura school, but a few undoubtedly maintain the continuity. There is a sculpture inside a niche on a pillar from Mathura in which a man is depicted as kissing a lady who has placed her hand on the man's thigh (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 3).[2] Occasional Bachhanalian scenes often depict drunken revelry. In a famous sculpture from Mathura, now in the National Museum, a charming young lady is being offered wine by a female attendant and when she falls down drunk, a youth offers to support her. The scene probably depicts a *veśāvāsa* or courtesan's house.[3] In Vengi art (2nd century A.D.) a number of representations of amorous couples tell a graphic story of love and play. Unhesitatingly they depict different stages of the progress of the love-play: the approach and the proposal, mild resentment, a little bit of coaxing and the ultimate union. In the couples of Nagarjunikonda, the men are sober and dignified but their semi-nude partners are vibrant and playful, at times restless in their frenzied ecstasy. The sculptures nevertheless betray a remarkable restraint over sensuousness and are by no means lewd. There is not the slightest suggestion of deliberate exhibitionism.

From the 4th to the 6th century, which is the age of efflorescence of Indian Art, a number of representations of the *mithuna* are found on the monuments. This is a period of material prosperity and the amorous couples symbolise the worldly contentment of the age. The representations of *mithuna* on the Gupta temple of Deogarh, in Jhansi district, are over a dozen in number. Generally the man and

[1] *K. S.*, pl 18.
[2] *Marg*, Vol. XV (Mathura Number), p. 36, pl. 20, lower sculpture.
[3] Cf. C. Sivaramamurti, *Indian Sculpture* (1961), p 37.

woman stand in an amorous attitude, the man having placed his arm on the shoulder of the lady or the lady holding the hand of the man.[1] Such couples occur both on the face of the plinth as well as on the jambs of the sanctum doorway.[2] A few representations of the *mithuna* are especially noteworthy from the point of view of the historical development of this motif on temples, for they no longer remain composed and restrained but become frank and agitated. In one case (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 4), 'the woman has completely reclined against the man, this time with head bent forward, the left hand being placed on the scarf of the man's *dhotī* and the other doubled and supported by the man's right hand while his other hand holds up the end of the *dhotī* of the female companion.'[3] The man obviously is gently disrobing her. In another (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 5), it is the lady who is more aggressive. Drooping slightly forward, she reclines on the man round whom she entwines her right arm and holds the male organ with her left hand. The man, too, fondles the breast of the lady with his right hand and embraces her with the other.[4] One more important feature is perceptible in the *mithuna* sculptures of Deogarh, and that is the presence of more than two persons, the third being an attendant.[5]

The tradition of depicting amorous couples continued also in the Deccan and the temples of Aihole and Bādāmī have several such representations. In one instance in the Durgā temple (6th century A.D.),[6] the lady has placed her right hand on the shoulder of the man and holds with her right the hanging scarf of her partner near his right thigh. The man similarly embraces the lady with his right hand and gently caresses her breast with his left. The lady's act of holding the man's scarf in the above manner betrays frank eroticism. Cave No. III of Bādāmī (6th century A.D.) has two notable sculptures of amorous pairs. In one, which is the representation of Kāma and Rati,[7] (the god of love and his consort), the latter inclines towards the former and has placed her hand on his shoulder, her left leg being entwined with the leg of her spouse. In the other,[8] the lady is shown lying in the lap of the man, who supports her on his right hand and has rested his left hand on her breasts. It is interesting that two female attendants flank the couple. Ajantā paintings of about the same age similarly depict princely couples in which the lady is seated in the lap of the prince who is indulging in the preliminaries to love, such as offering a drink, caressing or embracing.[9] In the sculptures, too, the Ajantā artist has given expression to ardent love between the two lovers.

[1] M S Vats, 'The Gupta Temple at Deogarh,' *A S M*, No 70, pls VIII (a), (b) and XIV (e)

[2] An early depiction of *mithuna* in the Gupta period is found on the door jamb of Nachnā temple in Bundelkhand It also occurs on a door frame of the same period discovered at Sarnath.

[3] M S Vats, op cit, pp. 21-22, pl. XXIV (b) extreme right.

[4] Ibid, p. 21, pl XXIV (b), second couple from the left

[5] Ibid, pl. XXVI (a) Mithuna sculptures are found in the medieval temple at Sanchi also

[6] Heinrich Zimmer, op cit, pl. 120.

[7] Ibid, pl 129.

[8] Ibid, pl 133.

[9] Cf B. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India* (1959), pl. 92.

A number of sculptures at Ellorā (c. 750-850 A.D.) depict erotic poses in which the couples are shown in a variety of embraces, fondling, kissing and caressing each other[1]. In fact, some of the *mithuna* depictions in the Kailāśa temple at Ellorā are among the finest representations of human love in Indian art, of man and woman in close embrace. The *mithuna* compositions of Ellorā are too numerous to be individually described in a brief historical survey such as we have undertaken. Suffice it to say here that the couples at Ellorā appear to have completely overcome the inhibitions of the earlier specimens. Shorn of all self-consciousness and oblivious of the surroundings, we notice the lovers in a close creeper-like embrace. Sometimes they are lost in admiring looks; sometimes they are engaged in light kisses and gentle caresses. Occasionally there is an eagerness to cut across the preliminaries, when we notice a too insistent lover or an even bolder beloved in intimate poses. There is even a suggestion of unashamed abandon and abnormal liberties. The couples do not appear to care even for the attendants at hand—which, by the way, is a normal feature at Ellorā. But the ingenuity of the artist has generally overcome the necessity of an obvious depiction of sexual union which is happily left to the imagination of the onlooker. Despite this caution, however, with Ellorā sculptures we are clearly on the threshold of the sculptural eroticism of the medieval period.

EROTIC SCULPTURES IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD AND AFTER

During the 9th-13th centuries there was a remarkable activity of temple-building in Northern India. Orissa, Madhya Bharata, Rajasthan and Gujarat became great centres of monumental temples. By this time the sculpture, no longer independent and accessory, becomes an essential part of the temple and almost overwhelms it. The surfaces of the temple walls were overlaid with innumerable carvings of gods, goddesses, semi-divine beings, dancers, musicians, warriors, and so on. These carvings also included erotic sculptures, occasionally at very prominent places. In Orissa such sculptures are quite abundant in the temples of Puri and Konarak. From the point of view of erotic compositions and their content, there is little to distinguish these Orissan temples from their counterparts at Khajuraho. In fact, the erotic sculptures of Konarak alone may outnumber such compositions in all the temples of Khajuraho taken together. At Konarak, a number of them portray sexual plays in which all decencies of the modern age are thrown to the winds. They deal with sex in the frankest fashion.[2] The sight of a male in the company of two ladies is also not uncommon.[3] At Bhubaneswar, 'one panel in northern facade of the Śiśreśvara even shows the sexual

[1] Cf Zimmer, op. cit., pls. 213 and 224; Gupte and Mahajan, *Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves* (1962), pls. 107-16.

[2] Cf *Marg*, Vol XII, No. 1, pl 6, p 46; pl. 10, p. 52; pl. 13, p 53.

[3] Cf. Ibid, pl 8, p. 50; pl. 11, p 52.

intercourse between man and animal, which is perhaps a deer.'[1] Erotic scenes are similarly found in the sculptures of Rajasthan, as for instance at Baroli.[2] In a niche outside the main temple at Baroli, a lady is depicted standing in a peacock manner on the left leg while the right one is turned at the knee. A man is seen kissing the lady from behind while his left hand is busy disrobing her.[3] On a fragment of a door jamb (13th century), discovered in the Varanasi district,[4] a lady standing in *śālabhañjikā* pose touches the reproductive organ of a smaller female figure standing to her right. On the upper field of the same fragment, a couple is depicted in sexual embrace in a standing posture. In some of the 11th century temples of the Deccan also, as for instance at Balsane in Khandesh and Avera at Sinnar in the Nasik district, erotic sculptures can be noticed.[5] In the 9th century Avantīśwara temple in Kashmir, a sculpture depicts a lover taking the beloved on his lap and gently caressing her chin. The eyes of the lady are closed in ecstasy.[6]

Even after the 13th century, when the temple building activity in North India definitely declined, erotic motifs continued to be carved sporadically in the decorative scheme of the temples, particularly in the South, which saw the final phase of temple architecture in the 17th century. In the Prasanna Channa Keśava temple of Mysore, constructed in the 13th century, different couples are depicted as engaged in love-making, on the frieze round the temple base.[7] There is a peculiar, rather humorous, erotic scene in the Varadarāja Perumal Śaiva temple of Kāñchīpuram, built in the 16th century. The man, probably a Śaiva devotee, is depicted as blowing a long horn and at the same time enjoying his acrobatic partner.[8] Even in the Vaishṇava temples such sculptures are not wanting. In the famous Raṅganāthaswāmī temple of Śrīraṅgam, built about a century later, acrobatic couples and others are freely depicted as engaged in making love. On one of the pillars a couple is engaged in coitus-invertus.[9] In the Vellore temple of the 17th century, a prince is shown enjoying coitus with a lady in a standing posture.[10] In the Ramaswāmī temple of Kumbhakoṇḍam, built in the same century, the lover is depicted as caressing the breasts of his beloved after taking her on his lap. Sometimes Krishṇa, standing flanked by Rukminī and Rādhā, puts his arm round their necks and gently caresses the bosom.[11]

[1] K C Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar* (1961), p 104 The erotic sculptures figure in all the temples at Bhubaneswar, the only notable exception being the Muktеśvara temple

[2] *Marg*, Vol XII, No 2, pl 3, p 35, pl 6, p 36, pl 7, p 37

[3] Cf Ibid, pl 6, p 36

[4] This sculpture is now preserved in the collection of the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Banaras Hindu University

[5] Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (1956), p 131

[6] P. Thomas, op cit, pl XVIII-44 Erotic poses are found in the medieval temple at Sanchi also.

[7] *K. S*, pls 76-77.

[8] Ibid, pl 80.

[9] Ibid., pl 81

[10] P. Thomas, op cit, pl. XXIX-69.

[11] Ibid, pls XXIV-57, XXVII-66

The age old tradition of erotic sculpture continued as late as the 19th century in the Brahmanic and Buddhist sculptures of Nepal. There is a sufficiently late Nepalese temple (about 200 years old) at Varanasi, which has beautiful wooden carvings. On the wooden beams supporting the roof have been carved figures in various poses of union. Two of these carvings depict fantastic poses normally impracticable. Similarly, in two of them the ladies are shown either as using artificial means for sexual satisfaction or making love with one of the same sex. The rest of the carvings portray normal sexual poses in which the assistance of an attendant is often sought.

It will thus be evident from the above survey that the theme of 'human love' in stones is not confined to the Khajuraho temples alone but extends widely, both in space and time. This fact should also be borne in mind while making any attempt to explain the eroticism of Khajuraho sculptures.

Chapter 16

EROTIC SCULPTURES—AN INTERPRETATION

NOW when we are familiar with the background of sex and sensuousness in Indian life and literature, religion and art, we are in a better and more comfortable position to appraise and appreciate the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho temples. The erotic scenes are depicted on the temple walls both inside and outside with the same profusion of detail as any other aspect of life like dancing, fighting, bathing or worshipping.

In group I of our primary classification of the erotic scenes, we have included single sculptures of the Apsarās or Surasundarīs in voluptuous and sensuous poses, often exposing their nudity. The female sculptures have always been given much care by the artists. We have already traced their development from the Mohenjo-daro dancing-girl through Bharhut, Sanchi, and the Mathura Yakshīs and Śālabhañjikās to the Apsarās, Nāyikās and Śālabhañjikās of medieval temples. The early sculptures of the beautiful damsels are generally characterised by the weight and width of the hips, the large globular breasts against a sophisticated slimness of waist and a lush rotundity of limbs. These characteristics have been taken to point to a certain element of belief in the cult of a primordial mother-goddess, so common in various Indian religions. But at the same time, it has also been suggested, particularly in the case of the Mathura dryads, that 'possibly they represent a pointed reference on the exterior of the sacred enclosure to the transitory life of pleasure outside the peace of the world of the Buddha.'[1]

The Nāyikās and the Apsarās of Khajuraho often deliberately display their nudity and unloosen the knots of their garments. They are

[1] B Rowland, op cit, p 89.

most charming females who arouse sensuousness by displaying their youth, erotic moods and sentiments. Their gestures, postures, fantastic twists and turns of the body, are most provocative and seductive. Their full globular breasts, attenuated waists, fleshy limbs, the coquettish languor on their faces and the creeper-like flow and rhythm of their bodies are calculated and intentional. The Nāyikā has been portrayed in a great variety of moods and sentiments. 'She is sometimes a shy, unsophisticated girl who hides her eyes or face at the approach of her lover, and sometimes a mature, self-conscious lady who looks at him superciliously or turns her face away from him in a nonchalant attitude. She emerges from her bath, wrings her hair and looks fresher and lovelier. She looks at the graceful rhythms and contours of her body twisted in a voluptuous bend. She contemplates serenely and unconsciously her charms reflected in the mirror in her hand. She dresses her long, sinuous braids of hair, colours her foot with lac dye and extricates thorn from it in a playful spirit. She undertakes her toilet (*prasādhana*) in diverse, coquettish fashions. She plays with the ball, sounds the flute and practises dance. She touches her soft breast, writes a love letter, joins her palms in prayer and takes a child on the lap.'[1]

These sculptures present a glimpse of the life of the world. The temple walls, both inside and outside, save the cella, represented the world of worshippers and freely portrayed life in all its fullness. The artist has taken full liberties in fashioning the figures of these ladies on the walls. He was no more bound by the rigid rules of iconography, which otherwise put an unwelcome check on his spontaneous expression. The theme of *śringāra* was not peculiar to the sculptor's art alone. Through the medium of literary art also, the beautiful and seductive limbs of a maiden have been described. We have noticed in the preceding chapter how the poets and dramatists linger over the descriptions of a lady in a state of partial undress.[2] The sculptures apparently appear to follow these trends of expression. The influence of treatises on *Kāmaśāstra* is also explicit in these sculptures. A reference has been made to the sculptures of the Nāyikās with crescent-shaped nail-marks on the breasts and near the arm-pits (*bāhumūla*). In love-play, which is likened to a combat, finger nail-scratches play a very important role. Vātsyāyana,[3] and following him Kokkoka,[4] include the arm-pits and the bosom among the spots that are to be marked by the nails by the lover. According to their form, the nail-marks are classified into several kinds, of which the crescent-shaped variety is only one. The sculpture of the lady

[1] Radhakamal Mukerjee, op cit., p. 181.

[2] Supra, pp. 162-167.

[3] *Kāmasūtra*, II, IV. 5

[4] *Ratirahasya* (Tr. Alex Comfort), pp. 130-31; Cf. *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, III 52-61 There are eight kinds of nail-marks, viz, of limited pressure, crescent-shaped, circular, like a line, like a tiger's claw, like a peacock's foot, like a leaping hair and like a lotus petal (*Kāmasūtra*, II, IV 4) For nail-marks, see also *Ratirahasya*, pp. 130-31; *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, III, 50-51; *Kuṭṭanīmatam*, Vss 154-55, 161, 403, 623, 670, *Nāgarasarvasva*, XXII, 1-5; *Pañchasāyaka*, IV, 49-58; *Anangaranga*, IX, 22-29; *Kirātārjunīyam*, IX, 49, 59, 62; *Śiśupālavadha*, VI, 58-59; *Gītagovinda*, XII, 23.

writing a letter, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and the lady with a letter on the wall of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* of the Viśwanātha temple (Photo 57), have nail-marks on their breasts and near the arm-pits.

From the representations of the Apsarās and Nāyikās at Khajuraho, one can infer the various arts a lady of taste was expected to cultivate. These were vocal and instrumental music, dancing, painting, colouring garments and body, making garlands, dressing hair and arranging a coiffure, using aids to beauty, training pets, and reading and writing. These are included in the list of arts enumerated by Vātsyāyana for the same purpose.[1] These single sculptures obviously represent the life of the ladies of the higher strata of society who were adept in various arts including the very important art of love.

In group II, we have included simple *dampati* couples. Such couples, as we have seen earlier with reference to the development of the *mithuna* motif, occur on Indian monuments from very early times (nearly 3rd century B.C.); they are found on the Jain, Buddhist as well as Brahmanical structures. In the beginning the motif was a simple depiction of male and female couples, though the erotic nature was quite evident. Gradually these evolved into complicated forms and at Khajuraho the couples are shown embracing, kissing or caressing each other. Group III, depicting couples in passionate embrace, is obviously a transformation of the simple *mithunas* of earlier days which persisted at Khajuraho in the form of sculptures of Group II These sculptures are strongly influenced by the works on erotics written in large numbers during the medieval period. We have already seen that these medieval works derived their inspiration from the *Kāmasūtra*, which was still regarded as a standard work on the subject; many authors wrote commentaries on it. A few illustrations will help us to understand the influence of the *Kāmaśāstra* on these sculptures. There are a number of representations of embracing couples (Photos 93-97)[2] in which a lady stands on one leg and entwines the other high around her male partner; she encircles one of her hands round his neck while the other, probably placed on the man's back, helps her to press him to her bosom; she almost draws the face of the man to impress a kiss on his lips. The man on the other hand also stands on only one leg, entwining the lady with the other around the hips. With one hand, he supports the raised thigh of his partner and places the other hand on her back. The position of the man's hands is such as to draw the entire body of the lady closer to him. Often the latter clings to the man's neck and draws his face to kiss him; her one leg is turned at the knee and is raised and supported by one of the hands of the man (Photo 86).[3] These couples are completely nude. They are embracing and kissing each other, apparently as a preliminary to congress. This type of embrace tallies with the *Latāveshṭaka* and *Vrikshādhirudhaka* modes described in the *Kāmasūtra* and other later

[1] Cf. *Kāmasūtra*, I, III. 16
[2] Kand., lt out; Ibid, rt out, Lak., rt out, Viswa, facade.
[3] Cf Devi., rt out

writings. The *Latāveshṭaka* is an embrace where a lady 'entwining herself round the man like a creeper to a shala tree should pull his face down to her own, and holding it up should then utter a slow shriek; or, supporting herself against his body, should pretend to see something wonderful in his face.'[1] In the *Vrikshā- dhirudhaka* embrace 'the woman, keeping one of her feet on that of the man, presses against his thigh and entwines it with the other, and keeps one hand firmly on his back and with the other hand, presses down his shoulder a little, shrieking and cooing, attempting to climb him for kissing.'[2]

In the sculptures, sometimes the lady, while standing, clings to the man's neck and presses her bosom against his chest; she gently leans back with her face upwards as if inviting a kiss from the man. The latter, who is nude, presses his thigh against her and tries to disrobe her by loosening the *mekhalā* (Photo 90).[3] This embrace may be identified with the *Stanālingana* of the works on erotics. Suvarṇanābha defines *Stanālingana* as an embrace 'when a woman with her bosom brings pressure to bear upon the man's chest.'[4] In many of the embracing couples at Khajuraho, the female partner rushes forth into the arms of the man as if to melt and merge into his body.[5] The *Kāmasūtra* describes this type of passionate embrace also and calls it *Kshīranīra*. 'Almost blinded by passion and impervious to any damage to their limbs, the man and the woman in this embrace merge into each other (*Kshirajala*). The woman may be either in the man's lap or may be facing him or be lying in bed.'[6] Of course, the *ālingana* poses of Khajuraho couples do not necessarily follow only prescribed modes; the partners are only full of passion and desire, embracing, kissing and caressing each other as many of the photographs in this book show.

On the southern facade of the Devī Jagadambe temple, there is a beautiful sculpture of an embracing couple, completely lost in each other. The interesting feature of this sculpture is the nail-mark in the form of three straight lines on the waist. This sculpture reminds one of the description of Māgha that for a lady with nail-scratches on her waist, ornaments like the waist-band are redundant; the nail-marks give enough of beauty to her form.[7] Lovers during the height of passion freely marked their partners with teeth-marks and nail-marks as small tokens of love. Vātsyāyana describes in detail various kinds of marks inflicted on

[1] *Kāmasūtra* II, II 16, Tr S C Upadhyaya (1963), p 102 This embrace is possible in the following ways also. (a) With the man standing face to face with the woman, (b) with the woman embracing one of his sides or (c) with the woman embracing his neck (Ibid). See also *Ratimañjarī*, Vs 45, *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, V, 2

[2] *Kāmasūtra*, II, II.17, Tr. Upadhyaya, p 102

[3] Cf Chitra, rt. out.

[4] *Kāmasūtra*, II, II.26, Tr Upadhyaya, p. 103.

[5] Cf. *K S.*, pls. 66-67. This feature has led some scholars to relate these sculptures to the fundamental doctrine of the *Upanishads*, namely the principle of Unity in Duality The sculptures are stated to be symbolical of the union of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*—the male and female principles (Cf *A O C*, p. 29)

[6] *Kāmasūtra*, II, II 20, Tr Upadhyaya, p 102.

[7] *Śiśupālavadha*, X 85, 90.

the body during the active game of love.[1] In many representations, while the lovers are shown in passionate embrace, one or two male or female attendants stand nearby. It was quite customary for persons of the higher class to employ attendants for their inner chamber who besides looking after their master's comforts, also helped them in trying out difficult postures.

The erotic couples described above are the logical outcome of the simple *dampati* figures found on the temples and other monuments of the earlier period. The presence of these sculptures on the monuments was considered auspicious in ancient India. The *Agnipurāna*, recommends that 'the doorway (of shrines) should be decorated with *mithunas* (*mithunair bibhūsyed*).'[2] Varāhamihira has also included male and female couples (*mithunaih*) among such auspicious motifs, as auspicious birds (*māngalayavihagaih*), auspicious trees (*śrīvrikshaih*), *swastika*, pots (*ghataih*) and leaves and creepers (*patrāvalli*) for depicting on the door-jambs of temples.[3] An important reference about the placing of couples on the facades of temples is to be found in the *Samarānganasūtradhāra*, a medieval text on architecture.[4] The late texts relating to the *mithunas* on the temple walls apparently record a tradition of early Indian architecture or repeat the injunctions of some earlier text which we have yet to discover.[5]

Group IV, as noted earlier, frankly depicts sexual congress, fondling and extra-vaginal coitus. A comparison of these sculptures with descriptions of sexual congress in the *Kāmaśāstra* will make it clear that they are strongly influenced by the latter. There is a sculpture in the Devī Jagadambe temple depicting union in a standing posture. The woman clings to the neck of the man and both her legs are raised. The man clasps her upraised legs and waist and draws her closer (Photo 92). The *Kāmasūtra* describes an almost similar posture as follows: 'When the woman embraces the man who is standing against a wall, by encircling his neck with her hands, and supports herself on both his hands, clasps his thighs with hers and places her feet against the wall, then swings from side to side after congress, it is called *Avalambitaka* or the "Suspended congress."[6] The *Ratirahasya* similarly describes the standing postures supported against a wall, a pillar or a tree. There are four modes in this position: (*a*) if the man passes his arms under the girl's legs and raises her for union, while she puts her arms round his neck, it is the knee-elbow position(*Janukurpura*); (*b*) if only one leg is raised it is Hari's step (*Harivikrama*); (*c*) if she places her two soles on his two hands, while he leans back for support against the wall, it is the two-sole position (*Dvitaka*);

[1] *Kāmasūtra*, Tr Burton & Arbuthnot, pp 44-45 The literature is full of descriptions of embraces which were accompanied by nail-scratches and teeth-marks Bhāravi describes how the ladies liked deep nail-marks and passionate kisses during the embrace (*Kirātār-juniyam*, IX, 49, 59, 62).

[2] As quoted by Gangoly, *Rupam*, July 1925, p. 60.

[3] *Brihatsamhitā* (Prāsādalakshana), Vs. 15

[4] *Samarānganasūtradhāra*, Ch. 40, 33-34.

[5] Cf *Rupam*, July 1925, Ibid, January 1926.

[6] *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI. 36.

(*d*) if she sits in his hands with her arms around his neck and her legs round his waist, moving herself by putting the toes of one against the wall, throwing herself about, crying out and gasping continually, this is the suspended position (*Avalambitaka*).[1] With little effort, all these varieties may be recognized in the Khajuraho sculptures, similar to the one in the Devī Jagadambe temple. In such scenes, one of the lovers leans against a pillar, pilaster or a wall.

A very popular mode of union depicted in the Khajuraho sculptures is the 'animal-like congress.' The woman usually leans forward and rests both her hands on the ground and the man unites with her in the animal fashion from behind (Photo 101).[2] Animal postures are referred to in the *Kāmasūtra*[3] as well as later works on erotics. According to the *Ratirahasya*, 'In the Vyanata positions, the woman goes down on all four, like an animal, and her lover entering from behind puts his weight on her like a bull . . . .'[4]

A few Khajuraho sculptures depict two men engaged in congress with a single woman or vice versa.[5] According to the ancient Indian writers on erotica, when a passionate girl enjoys two lovers simultaneously or one man unites at the same time with two women, it is called *Sanghāṭaka* or plural intercourse.[6] Sometimes the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho also depict extra-vaginal intercourse. The man stands, while the lady seated on the ground clasps his thighs firmly and sucks his member (Photo 104). Vātsyāyana gives a detailed description of oral congress and enumerates eight types of it. These methods were adopted usually by male or female eunuchs.[7] The *Ratirahasya*, while fully agreeing with Vātsyāyana, only makes a reference to oral congress and does not discuss it in detail.[8] The *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, on the other hand, considers this topic in as many as thirty-two verses pointing out minute variations.[9] There are also scenes in which the man takes the active part and in a reversed embrace the lovers stimulate and satisfy each other (Photo 103). This mode of oral congress may be compared with what has been described as the *Kakila* posture in the ancient works on erotics.[10]

[1] *Ratirahasya*, pp. 139-40 The *Ratimañjarī* also describes modes in standing positions against the wall or pillar which are more or less similar to these (Ibid , V, 24-29)

[2] Lak , *Jagadī fz.* rt out ; Jav , rt out ; Fouchet, op. cit , pls. 74 (bottom), 86-87.

[3] *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI 37

[4] *Ratirahasya*, p 141. *Nāgarasarvasva* names the animal posture as *Vyaghravaskanda* in which 'the woman lies on her face holding her ankles behind her (*dhanurāsana*) and the man kneels, raising her thighs on to his knees and holding her waist.' *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, a very late work on erotics, describes *Dhenuka* and *Aibha* postures after Kokkoka's *Ratirahasya* (Ibid , V 30-31) The continuity of the tradition of depicting animal-like congress may be seen in the Nepalese temple at Varanasi and a 19th century temple of Kathmandu where the couples imitate the congress of horse and mare.

[5] Cf. Lak , *Prad* in rt. wall.

[6] *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI. 40 ; *Ratirahasya*, p 141 , *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, V, 33-34

[7] *Kāmasūtra*, II, IX. 12-19.

[8] *Ratirahasya*, p 148.

[9] *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, VI, 21-52.

[10] *Kāmasūtra*, II, IX. 34 ; *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, VI. 53. The sculptures depicting *Kakila* are also found on Orissan temples and the Prasanna Channa Keśava temple (Hoyasala, A.D. 1270) of Mysore

Group V, including fantastic sexual poses, is found carved on the *antarāla*-facades of the Kaṇḍariyā and the Viśwanātha temples. The scenes depic plural intercourse in which as many as four persons are seen participating. The central participant, sometimes a man, sometimes a woman, is usually shown as standing on his or her head (Photos 99,100 and 105).[1] As far as the united congress, participated in by several persons, is concerned, it was not an innovation of the sculptors. It was known to Vātsyāyana as well as the medieval writers on erotics. 'When a man enjoys many women all together,' says Vātsyāyana, 'it is called the "congress of a herd of cows."'[2] He further informs us that in several provinces such as Strīrājya and Bāhlīka, etc., many young men enjoy one woman either one after the other or all at once. 'One young man holds her, another unites with her, a third one feels the hips, a fourth one kisses her, a fifth man holds her waist, and so they unite with her by turns'[3] In a similar manner, one public woman could be enjoyed by several men and one queen by several noblemen.[4] Kokkoka has mentioned the union of one woman with as many as four men. 'This is accomplished by giving nail- and tooth-marks and by genital contact, using hands, feet, mouth and linga simultaneously.'[5] It is interesting to note that the Khajuraho example of the union of one woman with four men (Photo 105) follows the description of Kokkoka. Even after Kokkoka, all the important works on erotics have given place to a discussion of united congress. Prauḍha Devarāja names the congress of several women with one man or several men with one woman as *Goyūthaka*.[6]

It is, however, the reversed, head-downwards position of the central participant which adds a touch of fantasy or even impossibility to the scene, and which needs to be adequately explained. That the yogic *āsanas* influenced sexual *bandhas* is well known. Ample evidences may be cited from even as early a work as the *Kāma-sūtra* of Vātsyāyana. But we do not know whether that was the case in the present instance too. At least no work on erotics written prior to the time of the Khajuraho temples prescribes a posture in which the participants apparently assume a *śīrshāsana*. With reference to such compositions, there have been advanced purely religious explanations. It has been argued that these complex scenes translate into stone the Yogic-tantric rites of the Kaula-Kāpālika sect. But while trying to explain the complex sexual postures in the works of medieval India, Alex Comfort has put forth a suggestion which to us appears to be extremely significant in the present context. In his words, 'Probably one factor in the popularity of complicated postures was the growth of a tradition of "picture positions," dictated by the sculptural need in Temple art to depict the lovers standing—where the artists of Khajuraho require a lying-down position, for ritual or deco-

[1] Supra, p 152
[2] *Kāmasūtra*, Tr Burton & Arbuthnot, p 54
[3] *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI 43-44, Tr Upadhyaya, p 119
[4] *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI 45 Tr Upadhyaya, p 119
[5] *Ratirahasya*, p 141
[6] *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, V 35; Cf *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI 41

96



96 Union Viśvanātha Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)



[illegible] Kandariya Mahādeva [illegible] (Copyright Department [illegible] Government of India)

98 [illegible] Viśvanātha Temple (Copyright Department [illegible] Government of India)

99 [illegible] Kandariya Mahādeva Temple (Copyright Department [illegible] Government of India)



100

101

100 *Panel Interior of Visvanatha Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*

101 *Animal Cohabiting with a Lady and Animal-like Carving Visvanatha Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*



rative reasons, to fill a square panel normally occupied by a God, they set it on end, supported by maidens, with one partner head-downwards.'[1] Without going into the merits of his conclusions—which incidentally we find highly convincing—we entirely agree with his remark that the so-called 'picture-positions' on the walls were dictated by constructional needs of the temple. We feel that these complex and apparently fantastic postures were never intended to be what they appear. In all probability, they depict the plural intercourse in lying-down positions as given in the works on erotics But since the needs of the temple architecture necessitated images to be placed on a vertical axis to heighten the soaring effects of the edifice, even the slabs containing this simple lying-down postures had to be set on their ends Arranged this way, they produce a different or even a baffling effect and the onlooker is compelled to read in them more than is necessary or intended. When for a moment these compositions are imagined horizontally arranged so that the figures appear lying-down, they immediately shed all their mystery and appear to follow faithfully the injunctions of the *Kāmaśāstra*.[2] In fact, we suspect that in many other simpler compositions in Khajuraho sculpture, the partners were conceived and carved in a lying-down position When the slabs bearing them are made to stand up, the postures appear to be acrobatic and the participants assume tortuous and difficult poses. As an instance we may cite the example of the lady hanging by the neck of her male lover (Photo 92). But since there are enough descriptions of a wide variety of sexual congress in the standing, sitting or lying-down positions in the works on *Kāmaśāstra*, we cannot be certain that this was always the case. Even if the artist did actually conceive some of the compositions otherwise, they are perfectly explainable just as they appear on the walls

This, however, does not mean that there are in reality no acrobatic or impossible postures in the Khajuraho sculptures. Many instances may be found where the participants will be noticed in uncomfortable positions whether they are imagined standing or otherwise.[3] The impression created is that the strange acrobatics and the very impossibility of the *bandhas* were deliberately stressed by the sculptors, just as they are by writers on erotics, as if only through the unknown and the abnormal can sexual frenzy be fully conveyed [4] The sculptors appear to have diverted from the natural and the normal only to impart thrills and arouse curiosity.[5]

[1] Alex Comfort, *The Koka Shastra and Other Medieval Writings on Love* (1964), pp 64-65

[2] Incidentally, we should expect the ornaments round the neck of the central figures in these compositions to slide down to stick to the neck, but they are portrayed as if the figures were not actually standing on the head Knowing the limitations of art of relief sculpture and keeping in mind that by the medieval period, Indian images had been highly stylized, we still feel that this flagrant denial of the principle of gravity lends some support to our opinion

[3] Cf Kanwar Lal, *Immortal Khajuraho* (1965), pl 224

[4] Some of the difficult and often impossible *bandhas* of the *Kāmaśāstra* are *Sulachulaka*, *Paravritlaka*, *Pharipasa*, *Kukkuta*, *Bhandurita*, *Kauramaka* (Alex Comfort, op cit, p 138, ft n 1)

[5] In every country where erotic postures have been depicted, the artists were fascinated to show difficult and impossible positions The uninhibited erotic paintings discovered at Pompeii may be seen for several such examples (Jean Marcade, *Roma Amor*)

The same inspiration is the root of medieval Indian erotic literature which was more a pleasant reading—a pastime, rather than a guide for married couples.

Group VI, the last one, depicts coitus with an animal, such as a dog, horse, mare, bear, ass, etc. In some scenes, a lady is shown cohabiting with an animal (Photo 101), while in others it is the man who is depicted uniting with a beast (Photo 102).[1] Let us not forget that some animals, such as, the dog, the male goat, the donkey, the cat, the tiger, the elephant, the boar, the bull and the horse, are traditionally imagined to be extremely virile and it has been advised in ancient books on erotica to imitate the postures that these animals adopt in congress. Vātsyāyana says that while uniting even the voice of these animals may be imitated.[2] It is due to this tradition that the sculptors have shown the man or the woman cohabiting with an animal. Their intention appears to have been to depict the *bandhas* related to different animals. The other reason for such depictions might have been to show that the basic urges of men and animals are the same.

CONCLUSION

Now to recapitulate what we have discussed in the preceding pages. Indian culture, like its European counterpart, did not attach a feeling of guilt to sex. Indian literature is full of sexual allusions and symbolism and passages full of frank eroticism. Sexual desire was a positive religious duty and sexual symbolism had a religious connotation. Sexuality and religion were closely interlinked. In the background of this attitude towards life, Indian art freely depicted embracing and kissing couples on the monuments. They were considered to be auspicious motifs and had full approval of the *Sāstras*. With the passage of time these motifs underwent a rapid transformation and by the medieval period, in Khajuraho and other contemporary temples, every possible and impossible *bandha* of sexual congress was depicted on the temple walls without the least hesitation.

It was not without reason that these sculptures became so free and frank and left nothing to one's imagination. Society in medieval India shows general signs of degradation and disintegration. Royalty and nobility indulged in all sorts of luxury. Usually kings and aristocrats maintained large harems and women and wine dominated their living. Often two nobles fought for the hand of a lady and perished. Palatial mansions were maintained by courtesans or public women. It was a fashion for the nobility to visit these places and to have contacts with them. A host of dancing girls were kept in temples whose duty it was to sing and dance before the idol. They were paid for their services in cash or by endowment of land. But this was not the only source of their income. 'Most of them were no better than common courtesans and they plied their trade in their establishments which were situated not far from the temple itself. Pilgrims and sightseers who visited shrines in large numbers during festivals often diverted themselves

[1] Lak, fz rt out; Ibid, *Prad*, back in; Ibid, *Prad* rt. in

[2] *Kāmasūtra*, II, VI 39, see also *Ratirahasya*, p. 141; *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, V. 32.

in these establishments.'[1] Moreover, the temples in medieval India were not exclusively places of worship. They were also centres of the social, cultural and political life of the community. Large *maṇḍapas* of the temples were utilised for music, dance and drama, besides discussions on religious and philosophical matters, and also for the meeting of village bodies.

It is only to be expected that a galaxy of authors should erupt in the medieval period to write works on erotics. The *Kāmasūtra* was heavily commented upon. These writings served to satisfy the jaded appetite of the decadent age. In the sphere of religion, Tantric cults admitted sexual intercourse into their sacred rituals. They permeated all Indian religions to greater or less extent. Their incorporation into Brahmanical religions, which were world-affirming and accepted love of life (*kāma*) as legitimate, is understandable. But even world-denying monastic religions like Buddhism and Jainism could not keep themselves free from this influence. Buddhism was transformed beyond recognition and 'the sons of Śākyamuni,' to whom the world was full of suffering, and desire was anathema, sought to gain salvation in the arms of a damsel. In fact, the most flagrant form of Tantricism is manifested in this religion besides some of the Śaiva sects and the cult of Śakti. It is no less pathetic to see the members of a conservative and docile religion like Jainism enjoying the company of ladies of doubtful character during this period (Photo 89).

Now the circumstances of the carving of erotic scenes on the temple walls of Khajuraho will be clear. These sculptures depict the life of their age. The artist was bound to carve them. His age demanded it; his society approved of it; his religion sanctioned it; he was equipped for it by his age-old artistic tradition, and he was inspired by the writings of *Kāmaśāstra*. He himself was the product of his age and he was an artist who loved life, not an ascetic who shunned it. We do not overlook the fact that the sculptures adorn the houses of gods. We never pretend that their theme is non-religious. Most of the subjects of the composition must of necessity be religious. Some scenes are clearly direct representations of Tantric rituals. I have nothing against the opinion that we have in the *dampati* couples the union of the god and his Śakti, of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, of the *Atman* and *Paramātman*, though I would accept such views as a bit imaginative. Occasionally they deliberately try to ridicule members of rival sects. But even where no such direct identification is available or necessary, the subjects are still largely religious. In fact, the females on the temple walls are not the courtesans of this world but the inmates of heaven—the Apsarās, the Surasundarīs. In India it has always been so and it must always be so. But equally true is this that in and through religion and religious subjects, artists portrayed what they saw around them. A narrow sectarian explanation will never do. But for an integral approach we shall never be able to understand why we do find in this period eroticism all

[1] P. Thomas, op. cit., p. 140.

around whether in a temple of Śiva or Vishṇu or a Jina at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh or in a temple of the Sun-god at Konarak in Orissa. We have to accept that it is not this or that aspect of life but the whole of it that found its place on the temple walls. Commissioned to carve a scene, the artist gave full vent to his imagination and painted the life of the gods with the colours of the world he knew. It is not at all surprising that sometimes he outruns his literary brethren. He imagines more than was prescribed in the *Kāmaśāstra*. It was a leisurely race run hand in hand. Both the art of sculpture and the art of love emerge from the same basic urges of man and must go together. If the artists appear to follow what was in the books, they no doubt also appear to set patterns for them. Perhaps the final word of explanation of the erotic sculptures of Khajuraho would be that they could not have been forced on an unwilling onlooker. They must have been required. They must have satisfied. We shall end with the remark of Guyon that 'nudity in art delights us because we find, to our surprise, that the flesh is here presented to us without obstacle or hindrance, recalling to our mind pleasant memories and possibilities.'[1]

[1] René Guyon, *The Ethics of Sexual Acts* (1934), p 310



1



2



3



4



5

Plate XXIV

DAMPATI AND AMOROUS COUPLES

Appendix I

SCULPTURES IN MUSEUMS AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

BESIDES countless sculptures figuring on the temple walls of Khajuraho and the many now deposited in the Khajuraho Museum, there is a good number of sculptures from Khajuraho scattered in various other museums in India and abroad. A few of them are also to be found in the private collections. We give here a list of such sculptures, though by no means is it claimed that the list exhausts all the sculptures at present outside Khajuraho.

1. *Umā-Maheśvara*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 29, pp. 93-94). The sculpture is much weathered and one corner of the pedestal is chipped. Umā and Maheśvara are wearing the usual dress and ornaments. Above the *jaṭāmukuṭa* of Śiva, eight *liṅgas*, symbolic of the eight aspects of Śiva (*ashṭamūrti*), are shown.

2. *Ganeśa and Sakti*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 30, p. 94; A. Getty, *Ganeśa*, pl. 4a). The deities are seated on a cushioned seat over which fall the pleats of Gaṇeśa's lower garment. He holds a *paraśu* in his right hand and a bowl of sweetmeats in his upper left. The bowl has a thick ring with tapering sides. The goddess has her hair arranged in tiers in the shape of a *karanḍamukuṭa*.

3. *Head of Siva*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum. The head is crowned with a *jaṭāmukuṭa*. The top is broken.

4. *Kubera*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 32, p. 94). The figure holds a combined club and battle-axe in his right hand. His hair is dressed standing up in horripilation. The name *Shajuh* is inscribed on the base.

5. *Devī*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M*, pl. 36, p. 95). Only the face and the upper part of the image is intact. The goddess wears stylistic neck and ear ornaments.

6. *Nimbate Head*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 35, p. 95; Philadelphia Museum Bulletin, LII, 1957, 37). The figure of which the lower part is unfortunately broken bears a fine expression on the face. A round flower-shaped ear-ring decorates the ear.

7. *Crowned Head*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 33, p. 95; Kramrisch, *Indian Sculpture*, pl. XXXIX, fig. 93). The head is probably that of an attendant divinity. It is nimbate and wears a *karaṇḍamukuṭa* wreathed with pearls.

8. *Head of Attendant Divinity*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 31, p. 95). The hair-style of the figure is interesting. The hair has been arranged in four receding tiers.

9. *Śārdūla*

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 34, p. 95). The name *Chaturām* is inscribed on the right side of the slab.

10. *Dance and Music Scene* (Pl. XV, Fig. 2)

Deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Published in *I.S.P.M.*, pl. 37, pp. 95-96). The scene depicts a danseuse accompanied by drum and cymbal-players. All the three figures are wearing a *dhotī* with front pleats. The drum-player is bearded and has arranged his hair into double *chignons*. None of them appears to have donned the *dupaṭṭā*. The figures are sparingly bejewelled.

11. *Amorous Couple*

This is a detached fragment of a sculpture, now in a private collection of Banaras (Published in *H.T.*, Vol. II, pl. XXXIV). The sculpture is much weathered. The hair style of the lady is interesting.

12. *A Sow with Five Pigs*

The sculpture is owned by a person in Khajuraho village. It is obviously a fragment from some temple. It depicts a sow milking her five pigs. The depiction of the pigs is quite natural. The piece may be regarded as a good study of the animal by the Chandella sculptor. Unpublished

13. *A Thin Frieze* (Photo 34)

Stored in the Jaina temple courtyard. The frieze is a fragmentary part of some Jaina temple, no longer extant. It depicts two different scenes. In one, a Jaina ascetic is seated on a cushion with a slanting back and is attended by other ascetics. In the other, a fight between two elephants is shown. Unpublished.

14. *Horse in the Round*

This sculptured fragment lies in the compound of the palace of the Maharaja of Chhatarpur at Khajuraho. The horse is fully caparisoned and a sword is also attached to the saddle. Unfortunately the muzzle and the legs of the horse are broken. This horse in the round is the only example of its kind at Khajuraho. The specimen gives vivid details regarding the equipment of a horse Unpublished.

15. *Adinātha* (Photo 71)

Stored in the Jaina temple courtyard. The image is one of the most beautiful sculptures of Khajuraho. Although belonging to 9th-10th century the figure has a close resemblance to the Sarnath preaching Buddha in expression and spiritual effect. Unpublished.

16. *Neminātha* (Photo 73)

Originally belonging to Khajuraho the sculpture was later transported to the palace of the Maharaja at Chhatarpur. The Jaina Tīrthankara, whose identity is betrayed by the representation of a conch-shell, is seated in *padmāsana*. He wears a high *kirīṭa* and profuse ornaments and jewellery. The miniature figures of devotees appear on the pedestal Unpublished.

17. *A Couple* (Photo 74)

Like the preceding sculpture, this was also transported to the palace of the Maharaja at Chhatarpur. This sculpture is important for the study of various ornaments and jewellery. Unpublished.

18. *Worship Panel* (Photo 60)

The panel is housed under a tin shed on the banks of the Sibsāgara tank at Khajuraho and is worshipped by the local people. The panel depicts the worship of a *Siva-linga*. The scene is important for shedding light on the rituals of worship.



102

102 *Man Cohabiting with a Mare, Lakshmana Temple*

103 *Reversed Union, Lakshmana Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*

103



104 *Animal-like Curves. Lakshmana Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*

105 *Pivotal Intercourse. Kandariya Mahādeva Temple (Photo Shama K. Loria)*



104 105





106

106 [illegible] Temple (Photo [illegible])

[illegible] (Photo [illegible])



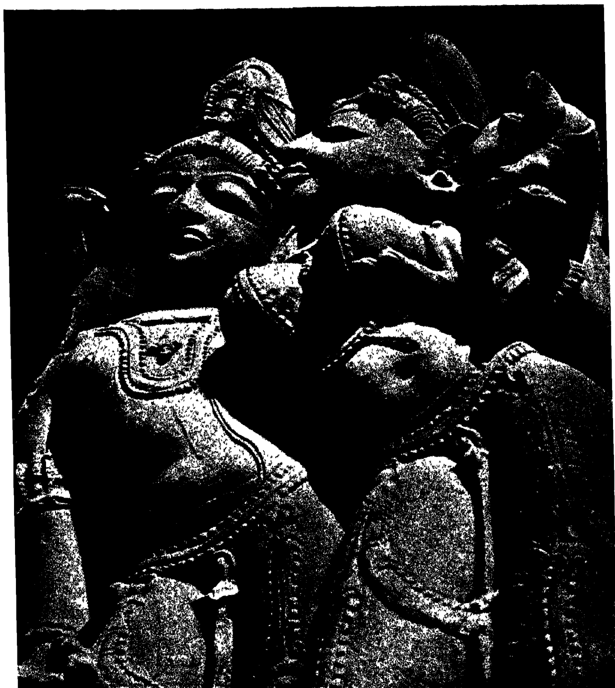
135 Divine Couple, Parsvanātha Temple (Copyright Department of Archaeology, Government of India)





100

100 *Plural Intercourse. A Sculpture in the House of the Diwan of Chatarpur. (Copyright: Department of Archaeology, Government of India)*



110

110 *Śiva and Pārvatī in a Tender Pose, Khajuraho*
(Photo, A. Banerji)

19. *Worship Panel*

Stored in the Jaina temple courtyard. The scene represents a Tīrthankara seated in *padmāsana* in the centre, being worshipped by the devotees who are pouring water from a pot on the statue. Unpublished.

20. *Divine Couple* (Photo 61)

Deposited in the Allahabad Museum. The sculpture appears to have belonged to some Śaiva temple.

21. *Lady with Mirror* (Photo 26)

Deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. A lady is depicted as standing in an attractive pose, beholding her countenance in the mirror held in her left hand. With the right hand she is probably applying vermilion in the hair-parting. She wears rich jewellery.

22. *Lady with Child* (Photo 13)

Deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The lady is shown fondling a child She wears the usual ornaments and jewellery and has an attractive coiffure.

23. *Lady with Paint-board*

Deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The lady is depicted as holding a paint-board and a brush. She is obviously engaged in painting. She wears the usual ornaments and coiffure. Nine nail-marks are visible at the back near the left *bāhumūla.*[1]

[1] The sculptures 21-23 are bracket figures They are regarded as masterpieces of medieval Hindu art These sculptures were erroneously believed to have come from Bhubanesvara and in all the old books they are mentioned as sculptures from Orissa But now, on the basis of the identity of style, material, dimensions and inscribed graffiti, it is evident that originally they belonged to the interior brackets of the Lakshmaṇa temple at Khajuraho and not to any temple of Bhubanesvara.

GLOSSARY

Ābhūshaṇa : Ornament.
Āchārya : Teacher.
Adhishṭhāna : Basement of a temple.
Ādināthа : First Tīrthaṅkara of the Jaina faith. His cognizance is the bull.
Agni : Fire-god.
Akshata : Washed rice used as an article of worship in religious and sacred ceremonies.
Alaka : Curly hair, frizzled locks.
Ālāpa : Improvised introduction to a melody.
Āliṅgana : Embrace
Āliṅgana-mūrti : The image depicting Śiva embracing his consort.
Ānaddha : The musical instruments of the percussion type, such as the *Tablā*.
Anantaśāyī : Vishnu reclining on a serpent and Lakshmī massaging his feet
Andhakāntaka : A form of Śiva as the destroyer of the demon Andhaka.
Aṅgada : Armlet.
Aṅgarāga : Perfumed unguents for application to the body.
Aṅgiyā : A short upper garment worn by ladies.
Aṅguliyaka : Finger-ring.
Añjali : A hand-gesture in the dance; dancer's hand is open with the thumb, index and middle fingers projecting forward and touching at the tips
Añjana : Collyrium
Añjana-śalākā : Antimony-rod
Antarāla. Vestibule, space between the sanctum and the hall in a temple
Anulepana : Unguent.
Apsarā : Enchanting damsels of gods; their abode is heaven
Ardhachandra : A hand-gesture of the dance, the hand is open with thumb and index finger standing up disparate, and the other three fingers bent at all the joints.
Ardhamaṇḍapa · Portico or porch of a temple.
Ardhanārīśvara · Androgynous or half-male, half-female form of Śiva, personifying the bi-sexual conception.
Arishṭāsura-vadha : Killing of the demon Arishta by Krishṇa—a mythological story.
Artha : Acquisition of wealth—one of the four ends of life.

Asaṁskritā : Unholy.
Āsana : Seat; posture.
Asi : Sword.
Astravidyā : Science of arms.
Ātman : The soul or self.
Avalokiteśvara : A Bodhisattva (previous incarnation of the Buddha, or heavenly being).
Āyurveda : The science of medicine.

Bāhumūla : Arm-pit.
Bālā : See *Kuṇḍala*.
Balarāma : An incarnation of Vishṇu, he is recognized by his emblem, a plough.
Bandha : An erotic posture.
Bhadra-niches : Pillared niches at important places on the temple-walls (for enshrining subsidiary images).
Bhairavī : The consort of Bhairava, a fierce aspect of Śiva.
Bherī : Drum; an instrument for martial music.
Bhojapatra : Leaves of a tree used for writing on in ancient times.
Bhramara : A hand-gesture in the dance; the dancer has the hand open, with the index finger bent forward from the base or at the first joint.
Bimbā : The fruit of a tree, which when ripe is ruddy and to which the lips of young ladies are often compared to in Indian literature
Bindī . Circular dot on the forehead.
Bor, Borlā · A kind of head-ornament used in Central India.
Brahmā . First god of the Hindu trinity, the Creator.
Brahman : The Supreme Being; Ultimate Reality.
Brahmāṇī : Consort of Brahmā and one of the seven Divine Mothers.
Brahmachārī : Student initiate.
Buddha · The epithet of Gautama, the founder of Buddhism; one who is enlightened.

Chakra . Discus Wheel—an emblem of Vishṇu.
Chāmara Fly-whisk
Chāmaradhāriṇī : Female attendant who waves the fly-whisk.
Chāmuṇḍā : One of the seven Divine Mothers, a fearful goddess with side tusks and a garland of skulls, the consort of Yama, the god of death.
Charma : Shield used by soldiers.
Chārpāī : Cot
Chashaka . Pegs of wine.
Chaṭulātilaka : A circular pendant placed centrally on the hair-parting
Chaturbhuja : A name of Vishṇu, since he has four hands.
Chaturmukha liṅga : Phallic emblem of Śiva, with four human faces on the cardinal points.
Chaurī : Fly-whisk.
Chikura : A mass of hair.
Chitrakalā : Art of painting.
Cholī : Tight bodice.
Chudīdār pyajāmā : Close-fitting trousers with folds formed above the ankles, generally used by Muslim males and females.
Chūrṇakuntala : Curly hair.
Chhannavīra : Cross-band for the chest.
Chhatra : Umbrella, a symbol of royalty.

Dakshiṇamārgī : Followers of a particular Śākta sect
Damaru : A small drum with two faces and narrow in the middle.
Dampati : Married couple.
Dātūna : A twig, one end of which is crushed and used for cleaning the teeth.
Devadāsī : Temple danseuse
Devī : A generic name for all female deities; also the consort of Śiva.
Dhamilla : Braid carefully prepared into a chignon.
Dharma : Moral and religious obligation.
Dhol. A drum, in general appearance like the *mṛidaṅga*, used in folk music.
Dhotī : An unstitched lower garment worn in India.
Dhūpa. Incense or vapour issuing from any fragrant substance
Digambara : A sect of the Jaina faith.
Dikpālas : Guardians of the quarters—Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirṛti, Varuna, Vāyu, Kubera and Īśāna.
Dīpa : Earthen lamp.
Dupaṭṭā : A piece of apparel for the upper part of the body, worn like a shawl round the shoulders.
Dwāra-śākhā : Vertical band of the door-jamb

Ekāvali : Necklace with a single row of beads or pearls.

Gadā · Club, an emblem of Vishṇu, and a weapon of war.
Gaja. Elephant.
Gajavyālavinoda : Sport of fighting between horse-rider and elephant
Gaṇapati. Elephant-headed god
Gandharva-vivāha. Marriage by mutual consent.
Gaṇeśa · See Gaṇapati
Gaṅgā : River-goddess.
Garbhagriha. Sanctum, inner sanctuary in a temple where the main deity is enshrined
Gaurīpaṭṭa : Base of *Siva-liṅga* with a projected channel for draining out water used for annointing the *liṅga*.
Ghana : Resonatory musical instruments, such as a gong
Ghaṇṭā : Gong
Ghaṭa. Jar
Ghuṅgarū : Anklet of small bells used by dancers in India
Godhā : Iguana; it is the mount of goddess Gaurī
Godhāsanā : A name of goddess Gaurī, since she has *godhā* or iguana as her mount
Goyūthaka : Congress of several women with one man or *vice versa*
Grihastha : Householder
Guru · Preceptor.

Haṁsasya · A hand- gesture of the dance; the hand is nearly open with the thumb, index and middle fingers standing forward and touching at the tips, the other two fingers standing up disparate
Hala : Plough.
Haṁsaka : A type of anklet.
Haṅsalī. See *toṅk*.
Hanumāna : Monkey-faced god.
Hāra : Necklace or garland.
Hari-Hara : Composite image of Vishnu and Śiva
Hari-Hara-Hiraṇyagarbha : Composite image of Vishṇu, Śiva and Sūrya.
Hasta · Hand-gesture in the Indian dance.

Hastalekha : Preliminary sketch.
Hiranya-drāpi : Gold-woven cloaks.
Huruka : A drum having two faces tightened by leather braces, very much like a *damaru* but larger in size.

Indra : The god of rain and thunder.
Indrāṇī : Consort of Indra and one of the seven Divine Mothers.

Jagatī : Platform.
Jaṅghā : Middle of the temple-wall on the exterior.
Jāṅghiā : A garment with some resemblance to the knickers.
Jhūmara : Circular pendant attached with a chain, worn in the ears and on the forehead.

Kālī · 'The black,' a terrific form of Śiva's consort.
Kāliya-damana : Subjugation of the serpent Kāliya by Krishna—a mythological story.
Kalyaṇasundara-mūrti . The image depicting marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī.
Kāma : Love or desire for sensual enjoyments, considered as one of the four ends of life ; also Hindu god of love.
Kāmaśastra : Science of love.
Kanakakāñchī : Girdle made of gold
Kāñchī : Girdle.
Kañchuā : A kind of bodice.
Kañchulikā : A kind of bodice.
Kanduka-krīḍā · Ball-game.
Kaṅgana : A round bracelet worn on the wrists
Kankali A sexual posture, a kind of reciprocal *fellatio*.
Kāpālika : A Tantric sect.
Kari Elephant.
Karṇabhūshaṇa A ear-ornament.
Karnapūra · A ear-ornament.
Karṇavedha : The ceremony of perforating ears; it is one of the Hindu Sacraments
Kārttikeya : Son of Śiva ; he is regarded as the god of war in Indian mythology. In art he is represented as riding a peacock and holding a spear.
Kaula : A Tantric sect.
Kaumārī : Consort of Kumāra or Kārttikeya and one of the seven Divine Mothers.
Kaupīna : A small piece of cloth worn over the privy parts.
Keyūra · Armlet
Khaḍga : Sword.
Kiṅkiṇi : Girdle.
Kīrttana Worship by singing devotional songs and dancing.
Kīrtimukha : Grotesque mask carved on the temples as a decorative motif.
Kośa . Sheath for sword or dagger
Krishṇa-līlā : Sports of Krishṇa described in Hindu mythology.
Kshīranīra : A kind of passionate embrace.
Kuchabandha : A strap of cloth used by ladies to cover their breasts.
Kuṅkum : Saffron, often applied by rich people on their body in ancient and medieval India.
Kuṇḍala : Ear-ring.
Kunta : Spear.
Kūpa : Well.

Kuppāsa : See *Kañchuā*.
Kuvalyapīḍa : A demon who was killed by Krishṇa.

Lakshmī : The goddess of fortune and riches, beauty and happiness, she is the consort of Vishṇu.
Lalāṭabimba . Central niche in the upper lintel of a temple doorway
Lalita-kalā · Fine Arts
Lalitāsana · The mode of sitting in which one leg is folded and the other is pendant.
Laṭakan : A ear-ring with pendant
Latāveshṭaka : A kind of embrace described in *Kāmaśāstra*
Liṅga or *Lingam* · Phallic emblem of Śiva worshipped in India
Lodhrā · A tree, the wood of which was used for preparing a yellowish powder for besmearing the lips
Luṅgī A short *dhotī* worn round the waist and knotted on the belly

Mahādeva Great God, a name of Śiva
Mahārājalīlā : Seated pose of royal ease
Mahāvīra : The 24th and last Tīrthaṅkara of the Jaina faith , his cognizance is the lion.
Māheśwarī . Consort of Maheśa or Śiva and one of the seven Divine Mothers
Mahishāsuramardinī : A name given to the composite energy of different gods ; a fierce goddess who killed the buffalo demon Mahisha
Mahout Elephant-driver.
Makara : A crocodile-shaped animal, the mount of river goddess Gaṅgā.
Makaratoraṇa · Decorative arch with *makara*-decoration on the gateway.
Maṇḍala : Circular mystic diagram of the Śākta cult
Maṇḍapa · Assembly hall of a temple.
Manikuṇḍala · Ear-ring made of diamond
Mañjīra Two brass or bronze cups struck together to produce a ringing sound Also a type of anklet.
Mañjūshā : Casket
Maunavratin A form of Vishnu symbolising silence
Maushṭika · Short sword or dagger
Mehandī Crushed henna--the application of this paste turns the soles of the feet and the palms a vivid red
Mekhalā Waist-band or girdle--an ornament worn by the ladies in ancient times
Mithuna · Couples in loving embraces or in erotic poses.
Moksha Liberation from birth and death—salvation
Morhā A round cane seat
Mridaṅga . A barrel-shaped drum, truncated on both the faces which are covered with parchment
Mudrākhya . A hand-gesture in the dance ; the dancer's thumb and first finger are joined with the other fingers erect
Mukha-liṅga . Phallus emblem of Śiva with human faces on the cardinal points.
Mukuṭa · Crown
Mushaka Mouse, the mount of god Ganapati.

Nakhakshata Nail-marks made by the lover on the body of the beloved during the excitement of love.
Nandī : The name of Śiva's bull mount.
Nāpita Barber.
Narasimha · An incarnation of Vishnu in hybrid form ; literally, man-lion.
Naṭarāja Śiva as the great dancer

Navagrahas : Nine planets worshipped as gods in human form. In the sculptures they are usually shown in a panel.
Nāyikā : Heroine, a beautiful lady.
Nemināthа : A Jaina Tīrthaṅkara; his cognizance is the conch.
Nīti : Treatises on Ethics.
Nūpura : Anklet.

Okhalī · Wooden mortar.

Pādakarma : Movement of the feet in the dance.
Padāti : Foot-soldiers.
Padma : Lotus, emblem of Vishnu and other divinities.
Padmāsana : Meditative sitting pose. The two legs are crossed so that the feet rest on the thighs.
Paharuā. Pestle.
Pañchatattva Five elements of fundamental principles : *madya* (liquor). *mānsa* (flesh), *matsya* (fish), *mudrā* (symbolical hand-gesture), *maithuna* (sexual union)
Pañchāyatana : A temple with four subsidiary shrines
Paraśu Battle-axe
Paraśurāma : An incarnation of Vishnu He is recognised by his emblem, a battle-axe
Parinaya : Marriage
Pārśvanātha : Twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara, his cognizance is a snake.
Pārvatī : The consort of Śiva
Pāśupata : A Śaiva sect.
Patāka : A hand-gesture of the dance; the hand is open with ring-finger bent at the face.
Pāṭalapādapīṭha : Foot-stool.
Phūlajhumakā : An ear-ornament imitating a flower.
Pradakshiṇāpatha : Circumambulatory path.
Prakriti · Primeval matter
Prasādhana · Toilet.
Praśasti : Praise.
Pūjā : Worship.
Purusha : The Primeval Man
Pushkariṇī : Lake, water-reservoir.
Pūtanā-Vadha : The killing of demoness Pūtanā by Krishna.

Rāga : A musical mode or order of sound. There are six primary *rāgas*, each has six *rāganīs* regarded as its consorts and their union gives rise to several musical modes.
Rākhdī · A forehead ornament.
Rāma : One of the ten chief incarnations of Vishṇu. He was the son of King Daśaratha of Ayodhya and an ideal man immortalised by such poets as Vālmīki and Tulasī.
Raṅgaśālā : Dramatic stage
Rāsa-līlā : A group dance.
Raśanā : Girdle.
Rati : Wife of Kāma, the love-god.
Rechita : A particular movement of feet in the dance. In this the foot moves on to the toes and the heel is raised.
Revatī : Wife of Balarāma.
Rishabhadeva : See Ādinātha

Ritu : Fertile period in women.
Rūpakāra : Sculptor.

Śachi : Wife of Indra, also known as Indrāṇī.
Sadāśiva : A composite form of Śiva.
Saṁskāras : Sacraments of the Hindus which cover the whole life of man from his conception to his death
Śaiyyā : Bedstead.
Śakaṭa-baṅga : A mythological story of Krishna's life.
Śākhā. Vertical band on the door jamb
Śākta. The section of Hindus believing god-head to be essentially feminine.
Śakti The female energy of a god; the consort; the female creative force.
Śālabhañjikā : Lady holding or embracing the branch of a tree—a very popular motif in Indian art, with many variations.
Śalākā. Small pointed stick or rod used for colouring the feet or spotting the forehead.
Śambhū : A name of Śiva
Sampādasthānaka : Erect standing posture.
Sāndhāraprāsāda. Temple with an inner ambulatory.
Saṅghāṭaka · Plural sexual intercourse.
Saṅgīta-kalā · Art of music.
Śaṅkha Conch-shell
Śāntinātha · A Jaina Tīrthankara
Saptaki · A type of girdle
Sāraśnā : A type of girdle.
Saraswatī · Goddess of learning
Saraswatī-vīṇā : *Vīṇā* with double gourds—a musical instrument.
Śārdūla : Mythical animal.
Sārī. An unstitched garment worn by Indian ladies wrapped round the body
Śāstra : A religious or sacred treatise; any department of knowledge or science
Sāvitrī : Wife of god Brahmā
Shikār · Hunting.
Śikhara Spire or tower of a temple
Sīmanta : Hair-parting
Sindūra. Vermilion
Śīrshāsana. Posture of standing on the head.
Śīśaphūla · A forehead ornament resembling a flower.
Śiśna : Phallus
Sītā : Wife of Rāma (an incarnation of Vishnu)
Śiva · The third god of the Hindu trinity.
Śiva-linga Phallic emblem of Śiva
Śobhāpattikā · Thin friezes on temple walls.
Śreshthin. Merchant.
Śriṅgarā · Love sentiment
Stanāliṅgana The embrace of the bosom
Stanottarīya · Piece of apparel for covering the breasts.
Sthāpanā or *Sthāpanāchārya* A folding table, a symbol of the Jaina *āchārya*. The monks while giving discourses place it before them
Süchasya · A hand-gesture of the dance.
Surā : Wine

Surasundarī : Celestial nymph.
Sūrya : The Sun-god.
Sushira : The musical instruments which are blown to produce sound
Sūtradhāra : Sculptor ; woodcarver.

Tablā : An important musical instrument of the drum species. It is in pairs played by the right and left hands.
Taḍāgi : A girdle for children.
Takhtaposha : Wooden bed
Takhtī : Small slab of wood used for writing on by children.
Tāmbūla : The leaf of piper-betel, which together with areca-nut slices, catuchu and lime is chewed by Indians.
Tantras : Mystic treatises of the Tantra system with its emphasis on Śakti worship.
Tārā : Buddhist goddess.
Tatam : The musical instruments which have strings, such as the *vīṇā*.
Tikulī : Circular tablets fixed on the forehead for decoration.
Tilaka : Decorative mark on the forehead.
Tīrthaṅkara : A Jaina teacher There were twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras in the Jaina faith.
Toṅk · A kind of neck-ornament worn in central India.
Tribhaṅga : A particular standing posture in sculpture in which there are three bends of the body.
Triṇavarta-Vadha : Killing of the demon Triṇavarta by Krishṇa.
Tripatāka : A hand-gesture in the dance ; the palm is open with the ring-finger bent.
Turaṅga · Horse
Tulākoṭi : A type of anklet

Upavīta-manner : String passing from below the arm on one side and over the shoulder onto the other.
Urdhva-liṅga · *Penis erectus*
Uruśriṅga · Miniature spires or turrets on a temple *Śikhara*.
Uśīra : A kind of grass—*Andropogon muricatum*
Uttarīya · A piece of cloth used as an upper garment

Vaidyanātha : A name of Śiva
Vaikuṇṭha : A form of Vishnu
Vaishṇavī : Consort of Vishnu
Valaya : Bracelet.
Vāmamārgī : Followers of a particular Śākta sect
Vāmana : Dwarf incarnation of Vishṇu
Vāpī : A well : a reservoir of water.
Varāha : Boar incarnation of Vishṇu
Vārāhī : Consort of Varāha.
Varṇa : A term used for social classes. Traditionally, there are four *varṇas* in India, i.e., Brāhmaṇa (priestly class), Kshatriya (warrior class), Vaiśya (merchant class) and Śūdra (servant class).
Vatsāsura-Vadha : Killing of the demon Vatsa by Krishṇa.
Veṇī : Hair twisted into a single braid and allowed to fall on the back; the flowers arranged in the above manner.
Vesara : Nose-ornament.
Vetrāsana : Round seat made of cane and bamboo.
Vidyā : Knowledge.

Vidyādhara : A class of demi-gods or semi-divine beings.
Vighneśvarī : Wife of Ganapati.
Vimāna : Towered sanctuary containing the cella which enshrines the deity.
Vīṇā : Lute, a very popular stringed instrument in India
Vishṇu : Second god of the Hindu trinity, the Preserver.
Viśwanātha · Lord of the Earth, a name of Śiva
Vrikshādhirudhaka : A kind of embrace described in *Kāmaśāstra*.
Vrikshikās . Lady in association with a tree.
Vyajana . Fan
Vyālamukha · Head of an elephant

Yamalārjuna . A mythological story of Krishna's life
Yoga : Meditation
Yogāsana : Sitting in meditative posture
Yoginī · Name of a class of female goblins attending on Durgā.
Yajñopavīta : Sacred thread.
Yakshī · A female Yaksha, the supernatural beings
Yoni Female sexual organs.
Yantra . Mystic diagram of the Śāktas

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